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ISSUE 158 • SEPTEMBER 2004 • FREE

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Vancouver Film Festival

Dancing in the Light

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Common Ground Publishing Corp.
Office: 201-3091 W. Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6K 2G9 Canada

ISSN No. 0824-0698
Copies printed: 68,000
Over 250,000 readers per issue
Survey shows 3 to 4 readers/copy.
Annual subscription is $60 (US$50) for one year (12 issues). Single issues are $6 (specify issue #). Payable by cheque, Visa, MasterCard, Interac or money order.

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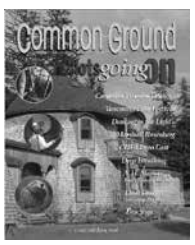
100% owned and operated by Canadians.
Published 12 times a year in Canada.
We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Canada Magazine Fund, toward our editorial costs.

Publications Mail Agreement No.40011171
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Circulation Dept.
201-3091 W. Broadway,
Vancouver, BC V6K 2G9
email: editor@commonground.ca

Printed on recycled paper with vegetable-based inks.



OUR COVER
Designer Peter Bromley neatly pulled together unrelated graphic elements to create this month's cover: a still from the movie The Scent of the Lotus Pond from Sri Lanka playing at the Vancouver International Film Festival, gong player Richard Hite from Dancing in the Light and the acorn image provided by the Canadian Health Food Association. A photo of the Altus wooden dome in New Denver not only suggested, but demanded, a circular, curvy solution to make the page hang together. Peter's other design work can be seen at www.ideocommunications.ca

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Crystal Garden threatened

NO PUBLIC INPUT ALLOWED ON CLOSURE

With the BC Liberal government's abysmal environmental record, it's no surprise that the Campbell government wants to demolish Victoria's Crystal Garden Conservation Centre (CGCC) in favour of retail space and a high tech attraction.

Unless there is a huge last minute groundswell, the architecturally unique glass-roofed heritage building on Douglas Street will close at the end of October and all the rare plants and animals will be dispersed. Built in 1925, the popular Crystal Garden was gifted to the people of Victoria 26 years ago as a refuge for rare plants and animals. There is no covenant on the donation of the property which can save it, and even its heritage designation cannot prevent the centre's destruction.

The BC Capital Commission, a Crown corporation, says that Crystal Garden does not meet the commission's new mandate of "connecting the capital with the rest of the province," though this concept has never been explained.

Eight of the 14 members of the commission are Campbell government appointees, which explains why no public input is being sought. The commission claims that this attraction has run its course, is losing money and that it's time to replace it with a financially viable attraction. As the Crystal Garden is not a charitable entity most aquariums, museums and public gardens are, there has been no opportunity to fundraise through charitable donations. CGCC supporters and employees say that contrary to commission statements, the centre has been making money in 2004.

A mongoose lemur

As a backup plan the Conservation Centre Society of Victoria www.crystalgardensociety.com is consulting with the owner of Butterfly Gardens in nearby Brentwood Bay to build a new facility there and is also discussing with a local organization the possibility of temporarily housing the animals which include endangered lemurs and marmosets. The commission says it will take care of selling and shipping the animals and doesn't want input from anyone.

Blue macaws

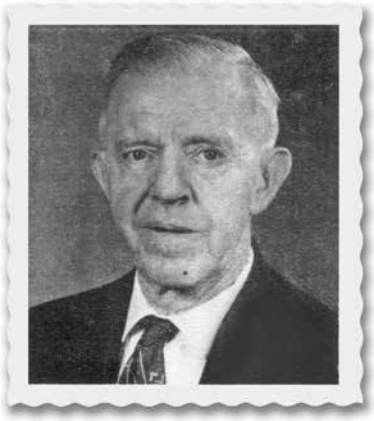
There is a third way. People can be allowed to participate in the decision-making process. Crystal Garden could be maintained with an adjustment to the architect's plan for development of the area. This would allow the endangered species to live out their lives whether or not you believe in keeping them in captivity. www.islandveg.com/liberate/crystalgarden. If you care about this decision, get involved: contact the premier's office, premier@gov.bc.ca; MLAs, www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-7.htm and the capital commission www.bcpcc.com. www.crystalgardensociety.com

CHFA celebrates 40th

compiled by Inga Shelton

In the original style from the November 1977 newsletter.

The Health Food Industry of today has come a long way since 1960, when health food store operators were referred to as faddists, health nuts and queers. Doctors like Dr. Kirshner, M.D., author of Live Food Juices were jailed for making written claims that raw juices are beneficial to one's health and well-being. The road to better health was a difficult road to build. It was paved with sacrifice, patience and no remuneration. The fight for freedom to choose the kind of food and food supplements each person wishes to use seemed endless. Verbal protests, signed petitions and signs like "the nutritionist of today will be the doctor of tomorrow" were our only ammunition.



Seventeen years have passed and some of our hopes have been realized. Faith and hard work have paid off. More than one "New Breed of Doctor" are assisting our ailing humanity with better nutrition, prescribed by these fine men whose main interests are not just the "buck".

The junk food manufacturers have fought us with expensive radio and T.V. ads, brainwashing our children and grandchildren. Lately however, I've noticed that the great giants are crowding in on our health food bandwagon. I seem to hear a voice saying: "If you can't beat them, join them". I'm glad that voice does not come from the mouths of our members. We, the health nuts, will go down in history as being the modern pioneers who revived our forefathers' ways of eating and keeping well. We refused to use foods chemically preserved and coloured for a long shelf life instead of a longer human life.

November being the month of remembrance seems like an appropriate time to remember the commencement of the Health Food Dealers Association of B.C. and the National Health Food Dealers Association of Canada. It was on the 15th day of May, 1964, when the first association was organized in Arthur Thrun's basement of the Hunza Health Food store on Broadway, in Vancouver.

Several unsuccessful attempts had been made prior to this date to organize a provincial or a national association. Some people tried to carry on in their own little shell and do their own little thing and let the ambitious group carry on. There is always room for some to ride on someones shirt tail.

Arthur Thrun was a man of action and humour, even though he was our oldest member. He called everyone he knew and asked them to attend a meeting and hear the message Ed Moxie, the former and first owner of Nature's Path Health Foods of Vancouver, had to convey. The meeting was well attended. Ed arrived a bit late looking very perplexed, as he had no idea that he had to deliver a message of some kind. After everyone was seated, Mr. Thrun said: "I had to get you all here somehow. I'm putting ten bucks in this hat and I'll pass it around for you to do likewise. I hope we can collect enough money to start the Health Food Dealers Association which is long overdue. I hope this day will be a day to remember."

Everyone present contributed and the contents of the hat added up to $175.00.

Temporary officials were elected. If my memory registers right, they were as follows: Mr. Arthur Thrun, President, Mr. Ken Ward, Vice-President, Mrs. Margaret Thrun, Secretary, Mrs. Ella Brizneck, Treasurer, and Mr. Bill Blane, Mrs. Florence Hogg, Mrs. Helena Blum, Directors.

We set up all night until 5 o'clock in the morning drawing up a constitution for the Association. Present were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Thrun, Mr. Ken Ward, my son John and I. We did this to save money. The lawyer ironed out some of our "kinks" and ordered a seal for our new-born association. We were now a signed and sealed organization ready to build that road to better health!

Meetings were held twice monthly, mostly at Thrun's place and sometimes at Ella's place on Kingsway. The secretary's files were kept at Thrun's place because it was more convenient to do so. Recruiting new members was, in my opinion, the most difficult task any one of us attempted. Letters were written, phone calls were made, and personal visits to prospective members were not neglected. Most of the personal visits were fruitless. Everybody not interested claimed that they were too busy to bother or couldn't afford the membership dues, which were very nominal indeed. We edited and printed two Health Food Dealers Digests using the Gestetner and assembling the pages by hand. Many long hours were spent in Thrun's basement and Ken Ward's basement turning the Gestetner round and round.

We sponsored speakers, held conventions and yearly meetings in the Manhatten Hall on Broadway. We could not afford to rent larger halls. I advertised the use of health foods with natural food smorgasbords, served in the Nordic Centre in New Westminster. Admission was 50 cents per adult and children were free; this included meals, lectures and free recipes.

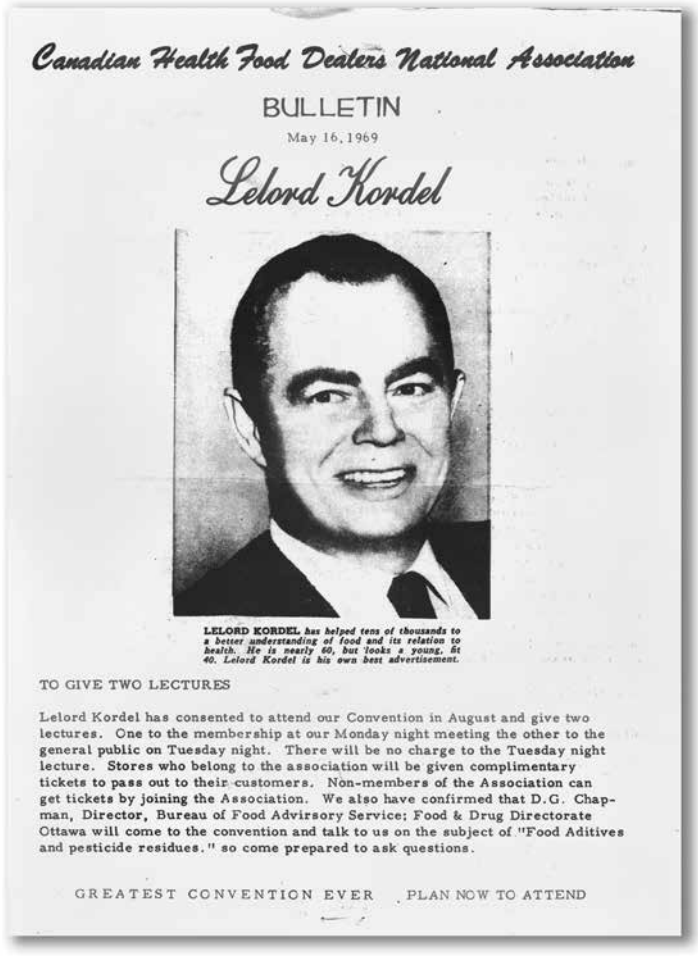
There was never any money left over, but the public had an opportunity to taste good food and try to prepare some themselves. We also had one such session in the Manhatten Hall. Those were the days, when all work was considered "work for love". We didn't mind it; we all were younger then, bubbling over with enthusiasm.

The year 1966 was approaching and we began to plan a National Association, which should originate in Toronto. We needed a National Vice-President to start the ball rolling in the East. He would have to be a Torontonian and one knowledgeable in the business. We immediately thought of Al Smith and elected him by proxy. We kept our fingers crossed and hoped that he would accept the position.

Mr. Al Smith did accept the position of Vice-President in person when he and Mr. Mike Carley, of Ontario, attended the April Convention of 1966, held in the good old Manhatten Hall.

We now formed two associations: The B.C. Chapter and the National Association with offices in Vancouver for both associations. The elected officers for the B.C. Chapter were: President, Ken Ward, of New Horizon Health Supplies, New Westminster, Vice-President was Helena Blum, of 3-way Health Store, Vancouver, and 2nd Vice-President was Florence Hogg, of Natural Health Products, Langley. I was eventually appointed Secretary-Treasurer.

The National elected officers were: President Arthur Thrun, of Vancouver; 1st Vice-President Sloan "Al" Smith of Toronto; Executive Secretary Margaret Thrun; 2nd Vice-President Victor Baich of Nanaimo; Treasurer Ella Birzneck of Burnaby.



Canadian Health Food Dealers National Association

BULLETIN

May 16, 1969

Lelord Kordel

LELORD KORDEL has helped tens of thousands to a better understanding of food and its relation to health. He is nearly 60, but looks a young, fit 40. Lelord Kordel is his own best advertisement.

TO GIVE TWO LECTURES

Lelord Kordel has consented to attend our Convention in August and give two lectures. One to the membership at our Monday night meeting the other to the general public on Tuesday night. There will be no charge to the Tuesday night lecture. Stores who belong to the association will be given complimentary tickets to pass out to their customers. Non-members of the Association can get tickets by joining the Association. We also have confirmed that D.G. Chapman, Director, Bureau of Food Advirsory Service; Food & Drug Directorate Ottawa will come to the convention and talk to us on the subject of "Food Aditives and pesticide residues." so come prepared to ask questions.

GREATEST CONVENTION EVER . PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

In June of 1966 the Ontario Chapter was organized. We were now on the way to getting organized across Canada, with plenty of hard work ahead for all concerned.

At present we are a much bigger and stronger Association but we have not yet reached the pinnacle of our goal. We can anticipate more battles to fight for our human rights. The bigger the army, the easier the burdens can be coped with. More members are needed. I would like to add that many more strong links should be added to our chain of strength. More strong shoulders should be put to the wheel of "Better Health for All Humanity", so you strong fellows don't hesitate to offer your services. To those who have not yet joined the Association, or have dropped out... Wake up, Think and Participate.

Editor's note: The national headquarters were originally located at 2813 West Broadway, Vancouver - just two blocks from Common Ground's current location.

Creating a world premiere

by Clayton Carrigan

Dancing in the Light combines the diversity of theatre, contemporary ballet and a world music concert into a magical story of life, love and reincarnation. The story is beautifully portrayed using elaborate staging, lighting and multi-media effects.

A trip to India evolved into this remarkable production. In the land of the ancient Vedas and Upanishads, it was easy to enjoy the vibrations and meditate in the beautiful countryside where many great souls had contemplated life and spiritual truths. Travelling from the beaches of southern India to the Himalayas brought me new inspiration and awareness that would create the theme for the ultimate love story.

I first started writing the basis for Dancing in the Light at a small hill station in northern India, a special place where Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru, India's first prime minister, stayed many times to discuss India's independence from Britain. It was this surreal location overlooking the beautiful Alaknanda River that would inspire the creation of Dancing in the Light, a story that would cross the boundaries of time and culture. As the story developed, it paralleled many events of my life. Even the musical jazz style and lyrical content of my music seemed to evolve into the new awareness of the devotional aspect. Dancing in the Light became this progression of ideas and spiritual thought that manifested into a mystical tale of a soul's journey to nirvana.

The story begins in 2500 BC India. This is the age when the forests and mountains harboured sages who were respected by all including the kings and lords of the land. To find and have an audience with such a wise and spiritual person was a great blessing for any who would make the journey.

Part of the first scene was inspired by riding an elephant in an Indian jungle. It was during the midday heat high on the back of my elephant friend that I spotted my first wild tiger and he spotted me. Laying in the meadow under a tree enjoying the shade, his attention suddenly shifted to this big elephant and rider coming his way. He surveyed us with caution as we approached. It is the tiger's forest, but the vast size of an elephant can easily intimidate the much smaller cat. Our tiger decided he'd had more than enough of being photographed and decided to leave his spot while showing his displeasure with a deep glare.

The second scene takes place on the eve of the Crucifixion. It's dark and windy as a crack of thunder silhouettes two Roman solders standing in front of Christ's tomb. The injustice has nowhere to hide as many, including one of the solders guarding the tomb, feel an innocent man has being crucified. It is in this sullen place of history that justice hides among the fear of the population. It is also a bittersweet time, when something special happens in this scene.

The third scene is set during the late 1700s. The song of the loon that echoes on a misty fall morning breaks the silence of the lake. The air is thick with anxiety and fear as the aboriginal elders feel the ever-growing presence of the white man's settlements. There is a rumor that other tribes have been put on reservations and moved from their sacred lands. This is disturbing to the tribal elders, but the chief has shown great wisdom and restraint in understanding the times may be changing forever and the prophecies are now coming true. It is a very thought-provoking part of the show where the connection with the past is challenged by the future. This scene was inspired in part by my friendship and respect for a wonderful and spiritual man named Leonard George of the First Nations people, the son of Chief Dan George. His insight into the historical and spiritual element of the First Nations people was important to make this scene authentic in the dance and the music.

Miles Black

The fourth scene from 1968 San Francisco shows that magic of the times is all around. The age of flower power and a new spiritual awareness has arrived in North America. The political shock-waves of the Vietnam war, the loosening effect of rock n' roll and the end of the liberal consensus in the US were a sign of the times. The Beatles, Martin Luther King, Nixon and Vietnam all share the airwaves. It is also a troubled time with this new generation of hippy ideals and their quest for a greater awareness in society and within.

Michael Creber

The production became a reality during a lunch meeting with an associate who had always enjoyed my original music. She was fascinated with the story and the universal, spiritual nature of its theme. It was then that we decided that Dancing in the Light should evolve to the big stage.

The first order of business was to involve those in the industry with a strong background on the world-class level of theatre and dance productions. It was through my connection with John Ottman, formally of the National Ballet of Canada, that things started to roll. He also introduced me to Sandra Botnen, a choreographer formerly with Cirque du Soleil. She loved the show's spiritual element. Then Michael Creber, a great musician friend with whom I had played many times over the years and I had lunch, and the band was formed. It was from that point Dancing in the Light became a world premiere.

Subsequently I met with Leonard George. Add Gerald King, a world-class lighting designer, world-class musicians, actors and dancers along with the positive energy of David Mott and the Up in the Air theatre company and the concept became a reality. The world premiere is now weeks away and the show is looking incredible. Dancing in the Light is a beautiful story where the audience will partake in a soul's ultimate journey to find nirvana.

Choreographer and director Sandra Botnen's career with Cirque du Soleil spanned many years. In 1999, Botnen performed across Europe, the Middle East and Quebec in the hit musical Notre Dame de Paris. Her diverse experience also includes choreography for television (HBO, CBC), music videos and an artistic gymnastics career that is honoured in the Canadian Gymnastics Federation Hall of Fame for outstanding achievement. Botnen credits her experiences with Cirque du Soleil for her unique approach to dance where she was encouraged to create new forms and disregard the strict rules of traditional dance.

Sandra Botnen

Botnen has rediscovered a world of artistic freedom with Dancing in the Light. "I feel fortunate to work in an environment where creativity is able to cross new boundaries," she says. "My process is to take the language of movement to the very edge, where it can release true expression."

It is this mastery of expression that Botnen looks for in her dancers. The troupe includes renowned Vancouver modern dancer Tara Cheyenne Friedenberg; Nathalie Lefevre-Gnam, former-ly of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens; Sylvia Gertrudix, a rhythmic gymnastic champion from Spain and former artist with Cirque du Soleil and figure skater-turned-dancer Mark Pillay. Botnen sees their diverse backgrounds as a gift to the production. Her innovative choreography draws from all disciplines, including her own experience in gymnastics and yoga.

Jessie Zubot

The actors include some of Vancouver's finest in Josh Epstein, (Bard on the Beach) Sandy Medeiros, Michael Armstrong, Joan Bryans (credits include Tony and Tina's Wedding and frequent roles in Hoarse Raven Theatre Productions to name a few).

The music in Dancing in the Light is a blend of world music styles from Indian classical, sitar and Tibetan gongs to Latin jazz and world music. All performed by top musicians and performers.

I play guitar and sing in my music, which has evolved through world-beat, Latin jazz and with a subtle Indian influence. My second CD, released in 1998, was performed mostly in Hindi and Sanskrit. I continue to collaborate on various music projects with a wealth of world-class musicians.

Michael Creber is a Grammy-nominated producer, composer and keyboardist who makes his home in Vancouver. One of the West Coast's most sought-after musicians, he pursues a wide-ranging career both in the studio and on stage, embracing many areas of contemporary music including pop, jazz, rock, blues and country.

David Sinclair, one of Canada's leading guitarists, toured all over the world with such artists as k.d. lang on her Ingenue tour and most recently with Sarah McLachlan on her Fumbling Towards Ecstasy, Surfacing and Lilith Fair tours. He has appeared on many television shows including David Letterman, Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien, Good Morning America and Saturday Night Live.

Miles Black, on piano and keyboards, has performed with many established artists from all corners of the globe. He has toured internationally, including a cross-Canada trip in 1996 with his own quartet, featuring legendary drummer Claude Ranger.

Jessie Zubot, violinist, is one of Canada's most respected fusion players. He has been nominated for various music awards in BC and nationally. He performs in the popular duo Zubot and Dawson at major folk and jazz festivals across Canada.

Miles Foxx Hill is one of the top session bass players in Canada and a staple on the Vancouver music scene. His styles range from Latin to jazz and world beat.

Rafael Geronimo is a well-known Latin jazz and salsa percussionist who has been playing in bands and performing since childhood. A versatile and well-respected percussionist, he is a staple at many large world music festivals across Canada.

Phil Robertson, on drums, has been on the Vancouver scene for 20 years as a member of Idle Eyes. He has also been a drummer for Burton Cummings, Paul Janz, Sue Medley, Valdy and Ellen McElwaine, among others.

Richard Hite, on Tibetan gong and chimes, is a well-known performer who is also a recording artist known for his CDs Icaros, Gong Songs for Shamanic Journeys and A Calling of Angels.

James Hamilton on sitar has spent over 25 years studying the music of India. He played with the renowned Radhika Mohan Maitra and Kalyani Roy during his years there. He is now leader of the world music ensemble Eastern Star.

Monish Thakrabort on tabla is from New Delhi as are Uman Tohan on percussion and vocalists Kirin Tohan and Gitika Tohan.

Audiences will get a chance to see this dynamic production and hear its phenomenal music when it makes its world premiere October 8 and 9 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. The Dancing in the Light CD will be released September 10. The CD is an accumulation of styles from world beat to Latin jazz. There is also an Indian classical and devotional song in Hindi. It's a CD that was two years in the making and features many of the musicians playing in the performance.

Clayton Carrigan

Children of divorce

EASING THE PAIN WITH OPENHEARTED BOUNDARIES

by Kelly Tobey

What can we do to make divorce less devastating for children?

In an ideal world, all children are fully loved and supported by their birth parents who, in turn, love and support each other. Back on planet Earth, this ideal seems to be in short supply. Even though a parental breakup is clearly not ideal for the children involved, in some circumstances it is far less ideal for the children if those parents stay together.

What can be done to support children with separated parents? Simply, the parents can do the necessary work to learn to love and accept each other, even though they no longer live together. This doesn't however mean having to agree with or condone each other's behaviours.

Parents who love and accept each other, yet have separated, have a more supportive impact on a child than parents who stay together just for the sake of the children. True acceptance differs from just a tolerance of each other. It is healthy for a child to know that two people can have differences and not live together yet still have the capacity to love each other.

Unfortunately, by the time many parents separate, their love has been obscured by a build-up of dislikes, resentments, insurmountable problems, and in some cases, a growing hatred. When children witness this, they will often start to question their own ability to love. For example, children who love a father and mother who have forgotten how to love each other may question unconsciously, "If Dad doesn't love Mom, maybe I'm wrong to love her," or "If Mom doesn't love Dad, maybe I'm wrong to love him."

Often children will feel compelled to pick a side in an attempt to settle their confusion. If the parents don't know better, they may even encourage the children to pick their side.

Unfortunately, when a person suppresses his innate calling to be loving with another, he injures his ability to be deeply intimate with everyone else in his life. If children start to believe that people have to stop loving each other when they have differences, then they will automatically start to close their hearts to everyone with whom they have differences, even those that are close to them.

> Many people who think they have to stop loving in order to say no also think that if they do love someone they must always say yes to them.

What a difference it would make if parents and children could learn to develop openhearted boundaries. That way, they could learn to say no to the differences that are not appropriate for them, but still keep their hearts open.

Often because parents never learned how to set appropriate boundaries in the first place, their breakups have harmful repercussions. Many people who think they have to stop loving in order to say no also think that if they do love someone they must always say yes to them. With these behaviour patterns in place, a person cannot refuse any request that comes from a loved one unless they first close their hearts and block the flow of love. If they haven't learned openhearted boundary setting, they will tend to say yes from a place of inappropriate sacrifice to any loved one who asks for something rather than experience the pain of closing their hearts.

For example, a beloved relative might call and ask the person over for a holiday dinner, and, even if they don't really want to go, they will feel bound to say yes anyway.

Continually making these kinds of sacrifices eventually causes a build-up of resentment. If people never learn to set appropriate, loving boundaries, eventually they will close their hearts to the other person. Sadly, it's the only way they know how to give themselves permission to say no and be protected from self-sacrifice.

Because of this dynamic many parents resist loving their ex-partners. They are unconsciously afraid that, if they were to love their exes, they would not be able to say no to getting back together no matter how inappropriate it might be. They will unconsciously use anything, from numbness to hatred to self-protection and maintain their distance.

This can have fearsome consequences for children who tend to pick up traits from their parents. If the parents aren't tolerant and loving of each other, even in spite of certain traits, how long will it be before they recognize those traits in their children and shut off their love the way they did with their ex-partners? Children unconsciously sense this possibility, and it can make them feel very insecure.

So what can parents do? They can learn how to make appropriate, openhearted, loving boundaries, so it feels safe to love without inappropriate sacrifice. When children see that their parents can love each other despite their differences, they don't have to live in fear of the day a parent will stop loving them simply because they resemble the other parent.

Whether a breakup has happened recently or long ago, parents who commit to opening their hearts will serve their children as well as themselves.

Kelly Tobey is a transformational facilitator from Calgary, Alberta. His Vancouver weekend workshop is October 15-17. Contact Jinny Jiwa at 604 277-9679 or Kelly Tobey at 403 217-5533 mail@kellytobey.com www.kellytobey.com. See display ad for details.

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Dru yoga

THE ART OF BEFRIENDING YOURSELF

by Louise Rowan

In a fast moving, high stress society, it is dawning on many that meditation is the way to find real and lasting relief.

Most people know that meditation can help one to relax, concentrate, become less reactive, control your blood pressure and aid a whole catalogue of things that maintain your body-heart-mind balance.

Yet for some reason many find it difficult to regularly practise this ancient art and often experience a sense of inner resistance.

Actually, meditation is not about trying hard to bring control to the mind. It is the art of befriending yourself. Whenever you try to control or discipline an unruly mind you will face a barrage of resistance. Therefore it is important to make the whole process as easy and enjoyable as you can, then there is a possibility that your meditation practice will succeed.

Before you set out on the path of meditation it is important to consider why you are practising. Is it because you wish to develop good mental or physical health? Maybe you are interested in uncovering the depth of your being and exploring your spirituality. Maybe you wish to develop your powers of concentration and insight. Whatever your reason, probably the most important message that meditation has to teach you is the difference between the way you observe the world from moment to moment and the way it really is.

there is a gulf between truth and reality; they are not the same thing. Illusion and falsehood are certainly part of reality, but they are not part of truth. We need truth, but our minds are occupied with reality.

In a series of dialogues between the famous physicist David Bohm and the spiritual teacher Jiddu Krishnamurti, they agreed about the nature of reality as we perceive it. They stated that there is a gulf between truth and reality; they are not the same thing. Illusion and falsehood are certainly part of reality, but they are not part of truth. We need truth, but our minds are occupied with reality.

These are weighty things to consider, and yet when the benefits of meditation start to become apparent to you, it is amazing how obvious these statements are.

There is not just one state of meditation. The ancients classified various levels of consciousness, from a mild state of happiness to intense bliss and the onset of the cosmic state of samadhi. The techniques that you employ do have some bearing upon the final destination in meditation. One spiritual master said clearly that not all roads lead to Rome. It is important to know exactly what you wish to get out of your meditation practice.

It is important that you learn to bring your body and mind quickly to a state of relaxation but which doesn't put you to sleep. Then you need to learn to focus the mind and withdraw the senses from the things that distract you. Finally the focusing should increase until the object upon which you are concentrating becomes merged with your own consciousness. In some ways you become the object of your meditation. Most people find it difficult to reach this point because they are too busy trying to achieve something instead of just letting it be.

Here is a simple technique to help you relax and focus. How far you go with it will depend upon how much you are able to let go of the notion of trying, or achieving, and instead embracing just the simple joy of experiencing the bliss of who you really are.

Observing the present

• Spend a few moments stretching and loosening your body before sitting down either on a firm chair or on the floor in a comfortable posture. Make sure that the spine is erect and lengthened. Use the breath to help you. Those of you who practise Dru yoga should use the turning the wheel breath.

• For a moment bring your awareness to the point between the eyebrows. As you breathe in let your eyes rise slightly, and as you breathe out let them lower to just below the horizontal. You will find that you will feel a rising and falling of awareness over the whole body once you get into the rhythm of this breath. The rising is called pranaarohan, and the falling is apanaavarohan.

• Continue with this breath for a few moments. You will feel that your awareness will begin to settle in two places. The point between the eyebrows will become very sensitive and the point inside the centre of your chest will fill with energy.

Gradually transfer the awareness to the heart point, the anahata chakra. Let the breathing focus in the heart now, keeping the eyes still. Slowly open your eyes. Keep the awareness in the heart as you do, and observe the scene that is in front of you, accept it as it is, see its beauty.

• Finally, let the feeling of gratitude well up from the heart for just being in this sacred space.

• If you find that your awareness moves out of the heart space, let the eyes close and practise the praanaapaana breathing again.

• To finish, bring your awareness to your body. Rub your hands together, then massage your face with your hands.

Practise this technique outside, looking at a natural scene, otherwise choose something beautiful to gaze upon.

Louise Rowan and Susan Kulas will be teaching a weekend of Dru meditation October 17-19. Contact Ann Frost for details annfrost@shaw.ca www.druyoga.com 604-876-5153

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Dadi Janki, Wisdom Keeper

compiled by Nikki de Carteret

An extraordinary woman of wisdom comes to Vancouver on September 23 after an absence of 10 years. A member of the United Nations' prestigious Wisdom Keepers, Dadi Janki is an 88-year-old spiritual lighthouse who travels the world speaking at international conferences and sharing her wisdom with world leaders and the community at large.

Born in India in 1916 she survived poverty, war and severe illnesses. A spiritual leader, Dadi Janki seeks not so much to change people but to model spirituality. Having risen above the restrictions of culture, gender and a lack of formal education she has dedicated the last seven decades to serving humanity.

Dadi Janki will be appearing in Vancouver September 23 at the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre, Hamilton and Dunsmuir, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Special guest performances by Rita Costanzi and Denzal Sinclaire. Admission is free. Tickets required. Contact the festival box office at 604-257-0366 or visit www.festivalboxoffice.

Following are some of Dadi Janki's words of wisdom excerpted from three of her books.

Become spiritually attractive

A spiritual path is like a school. Not a regular school where you learn ordinary skills, but a spiritual school where you learn the skills of spirit: like how to remove flaws in your character, or how to remain unaffected by the negative influences around you.

Some people think that if they follow a spiritual path, they won't be able to cultivate their individual talents. However, what kinds of talent do people really need nowadays? To remove one's own ego is a great talent; to love others is another.

If you can deal with your own ego, then your own anger can be resolved. This goes a long way to resolving external issues too. With your own ego out of the way you will be able to handle anything! Otherwise it's just the same old thing - you versus me, yours versus mine, etc.

If your friends and relations do not choose to accompany you on your spiritual path, why should you chase after them trying to get them to change? They won't listen anyway, no matter what you say. A better approach is to focus on your own change process. A river doesn't urge people to drink its water. People are naturally drawn to it, provided its waters are pure, free-flowing and sweet. In the same way, become so spiritually attractive, everyone will want to join you, naturally.

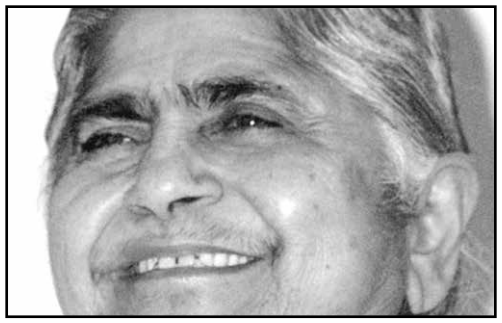
True love

Some people don't want to have anything more to do with love. Because there has been a deception from all sides, they have kicked love away. They think it's too complicated, too tiring. They say, "I'm not going to love anyone anymore and I don't want anyone to love me either. I just want to be independent." Actually, this is a kind of arrogance.

Life without love is like life in the jungle. You are constantly afraid of what might come to you. You are isolated, not receiving support from anywhere.

True love means pure love, and pure love is based on your innermost truth, goodness and desire to bring benefit to others. True love is uninterested in anything false. Superficial emotions that keep you on the surface of things are not the basis of true love.

Live in such a way that love informs every action. This is a natural way to be. However, it requires letting go of certain beliefs and habits that drain us of our strength and interfere in our ability to love.



Dadi Janki

Let your love be so true that even if others become your enemy, you don't stop loving them. You have to give love truthfully, from your heart. True love is what everyone wants, and so this is what you need to share. When your love is pure, others will feel that your intentions are pure. There will be love in your vision. And there will be kindness in that love. In pure love there is always kindness.

Just to take the time and effort to understand what love is, is in itself an act of love.

Peace is greater than the atomic bomb

Peace will be created by coming face to face with the things that are tearing our human family apart. Greed, anger, ego, attachment and lust have destroyed peace. There is so much sorrow in the world. It's not a question of going off to remote places of quiet or following a path that turns you away from the world. It's a question of learning humility and emerging humanity's mercy.

Don't give your mind permission to get disturbed. Thoughts are like seeds. As are your thoughts, so will be your attitude and behaviour. You need to be aware of how much damage is caused by negative thoughts. A disturbed mind is easily influenced. This will cost you your peace. Learn to maintain your peace by freeing yourself from attachments. Competing or comparing yourself with others will not allow you to focus inwards. An inner focus allows you to keep your eye on your higher self. A calm mind is not just peaceful. It is focused, self-directing and divine.

I have faith that the force of Peace is greater than the atomic bomb, greater than any power the world can produce. All of us need to put our faith in this force. I was once asked how I could stay so peaceful teaching peace to so many different kinds of people! I just keep my aim in front of me. I am committed to staying peaceful myself, knowing that this peace will reach my beloved ones and, ultimately, the whole world.

God's light and love

I have always been cautious not to separate myself from God's love, not to distance myself even in the slightest, thereby cutting myself off from that experience of Divine love. I am also careful that my intellect does not become engaged elsewhere so that God can use me whenever He or She wants. This is why my heart always stays happy and my mind stays cool. I don't let anything into my heart that would then require a lot of effort to remove. When you start thinking about the past or the future, you stir old feelings in your heart. Then it takes a lot of hard work to remove them. How can you experience God's love if you are always busy with those old things?

Many religions believe that God is Light. The wisdom of God is also light. Who made this Light? God did, from a state of eternal enlightenment. By chasing away the darkness of ignorance, God, the Being of Light, makes the whole world light. Light spreads from God, through the children who are open, into the whole world.

Truth and integrity bring power

Anybody who wants to be instrumental in serving the world needs to know how to work with integrity. Integrity elevates character and brings internal power. It reveals a pure attitude. Those with integrity maintain great humility, even while holding positions of high status and commanding a lot of respect. They do not alter their character or virtues according to whom they are with.

Integrity over a long period of time makes the soul powerful. A person with integrity is able to reveal truth through words spoken with wisdom. Truth means wholeness - nothing missing and nothing mixed.

The power of Truth is that you need never be concerned about proving it. Trying to prove Truth reveals only your own stubbornness. You need only be concerned with being it and living it. Truth is always revealed at the right moment at the right place.

It is for this reason that the simplest, most powerful expression of Truth is humility.

In May King Abdullah II awarded Dadi Janki Jordan's highest honour, the Medal of Independence. As one of two administrative heads of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, she is responsible for meditation centres in more than 80 countries and for overseeing many global initiatives dedicated to the United Nations.

Compiled by Nikki de Carteret from Dadi Janki's books Companion of God (Hodder & Stoughton, 2004), Wings of Soul (Health Communications Inc., 1999) and Inside Out www.companionofgod.com

The Inner Journey Home

ALMAAS'S THE DIAMOND APPROACH

by John Davis, PhD and Tim J Sullivan, MSc

"Whenever we do any work on ourselves, or engage in any way the inner journey, we are invariably working with our soul. There is nothing else to work on."

- A.H. Almaas

Almaas's Diamond Approach is a path of realization arising from and appropriate to our time, place and culture. Developed over the last 30 years, this spiritual path arose from Almaas's own experience with many students and groups in his Ridhwan School and is enriched by his studies of psychology and spirituality. In two decades Almaas has elucidated many aspects of the Diamond Approach through nearly a dozen books.

His book The Inner Journey Home is about the soul. Almaas uses the word soul as the best description of what a human being actually is: the individual consciousness that is aware, alive and dynamic and the embodiment of the potential for awakening, transformation and liberation. Consistent with its traditional use in the Western Gnostic wisdom, the word soul refers to the totality of our subjective experience, including both our familiar experience and the potential for full realization of our unity with the source.

The Inner Journey Home reveals Almaas as a cartographer of the soul's inner landscape. But more, he shows us that we too can discover for ourselves the truth of our own nature. His detailed and careful descriptions are precise discriminations of his own experiences and understanding. There often arises a felt presence for the aspect, feature or dimension he speaks about, or at the very least, an intuition or heart-felt longing to know more deeply. His writings function, therefore, as vehicles of invocation, inviting one's own consciousness to respond immediately, to experience its unfolding more intimately, to step into the journey home.

What is most remarkable about Almaas's work is how this understanding makes it so very transparent that the soul is not only who and what we are, but that its specific characteristics and properties are designed to reveal to us its own nature, and the nature of reality itself. The soul, as Almaas says, is the window into reality. And a window is designed, after all, to let the light in.

Almaas describes the soul as the organ of experience and the medium through which Being manifests in our consciousness. It is the soul that experiences. "The soul is literally the vessel that contains and holds all inner events," says Almaas. Thus, the soul is the internal context for the work of realization. This is the starting point for inner investigation, and this understanding allows us to investigate the medium of experience, not just the contents of experience. Perceiving the soul directly allows us to deal effectively with the obstacles to its full and free experience of reality.

Typically, the soul is dulled, thickened and obscured by the residue of old wounds and patterns. We live in a world dominated by this dullness, constricted and contracted. As we turn to inquire into these contractions, they open. The medium of consciousness, itself, is transformed, allowing us to experience ourselves and the world in a way that is richer, deeper and more satisfying.

Knowing the soul's properties means we will see more clearly which way to go, where we are going and what tools will be needed.

> The soul is the window into reality. And a window is designed, after all, to let the light in.

Guidance, one of the intrinsic properties of the soul, becomes available on our journey. Like the potter who must be intimately familiar with the clay in order to form the pot and ensure it will endure the firing to be both beautiful and functional, our intimacy with our own soul's potential, substance and characteristics will ensure we gain the most from our own transformation.

Almaas clearly shows that the soul is not an object or thing apart from reality and Being. Rather, it is the means through which Being perceives, knows and transforms. Ultimately, the work on the soul reveals that the experiencer is not separate from the content of the experience. In this way, our deep longing for connection is satisfied. While the soul has the potential to know itself in a differentiated, even separated way, its journey is toward a unity with Being. Like a wave that can be distinguished but is never separate from the ocean, the soul can forget its true nature but never be completely disconnected from it. Exploring the soul directly, we begin to know the nonduality of subject and object and discover that we were never separated from our source. The soul, seemingly in exile from its source, returns.

The central and most important potential of the soul is its essence, for essence in its various aspects and dimensions forms the ground and provides the platonic forms for all of our higher states of consciousness, and the higher faculties of experience and action. Soul and essence meet at the level of pure consciousness. They both come from the same ground, where essence constitutes the primordial ground and nature of the soul, its spiritual potential, the richness of its depth. Only with the actualization of essence can the soul be free, completely authentic and totally serene. Essence is its true nature, without which the soul is estranged, lost, inauthentic, empty, twisted. Regardless of how much of its potential it actualizes, regardless how much a genius it becomes, artistically or scientifically, if the soul does not recognize its essential nature its experience comes to be characterized by emptiness and strife, on the same level as most human beings.

The central path of the Diamond Approach is based on the practice of inquiry. As Almaas describes and teaches it, inquiry is the exploration of present experience. It is open-ended and goalless. Inquiry is not intended to bring our experience into any particular state or condition. Rather, inquiry opens the soul to its experience in the present in a more complete way, whatever the nature of that experience. Inquiry is always present-centred, and it always brings us into direct contact with our experience, at first through our feelings, body-centred experience, thoughts, memories and associations, and then through direct knowing of presence or essence.

As we begin to practise inquiry, the true nature of the soul guides its unfolding. The unconscious is revealed more completely, and the barriers that limit the soul are exposed. This material is often difficult or painful to experience. Undigested wounds get calcified in the soul, defensive structures get fixated and the result is rigidity, thickness and a lack of aliveness in the soul. We fear the breakdown of our familiar structures and the exposure of the unconscious issues we have avoided. The rigid and fixated structuring of the soul that contains the sum total of these obscurations is what we call the ego. While these structures may have begun as necessary defences to protect the soul and allow its functioning, they now block the soul from knowing and expressing its true nature.

At this point, the Diamond Approach's understanding of the psychodynamic roots of the ego is extremely helpful. Knowing where and how to explore these obstacles, along with knowing the soul's qualities, allows them to be explored, dissolved and integrated. Almaas shows, in very detailed ways, how the soul's properties, functions, and indeed, its very nature are oriented and designed to reveal the nature of reality and its own unity with reality. The process of open-ended inquiry allows these revelations.

Orienting ourselves to the soul helps demystify the more esoteric elements of the spiritual journey. Touching the soul directly, we find a profound settling and a contented simplicity. We have an immediate sense of our experience without the overlay of habits, history and patterns. We are here, alive and awake in the present. Our experience flows in a smooth, harmonious way. The abiding fullness of presence and the quiet stillness of emptiness attend the soul. This sense of just being ourselves, as we truly are in the moment, cuts through our complicated ideas about spirituality.

Whether we are taking a walk, having tea with a friend, working at our jobs, taking care of the details of our lives, sitting in deep silence on a meditation cushion or loving with passion - regardless of the content of our experience - the soul's potential is to be present, alive, open and satisfied. The soul's potential is to transform itself on its journey. Equally important, our painful, contracted, defensive, judgmental and avoidant experiences also hold potential for supporting the soul's unfolding. By working with emotional blockages, conditioned patterns of thought and feeling along with the internalized structures of self-image and concepts, the soul unfolds.

The soul's natural tendency is toward freedom and realization. The Diamond Approach of Almaas provides understanding, guidance and support for this ongoing discovery. As we experience the soul with more clarity and more presence, it reveals the obstacles that need to be dealt with. As we open to the soul's possibilities, it guides us by revealing precisely the qualities needed to continue its journey home. Finally, we realize that the soul's potential is unlimited and boundless. The journey is never complete, and we are always home.

Almaas is author of Inner Journey Home, Essence, The Void, The Pearl Beyond Price, The Point of Existence, Spacecruiser Inquiry, Luminous Night's Journey, and Diamond Heart Books 1-4.

A public talk and book signing: Friday, October 8 at 7:30 pm, at St. Andrews-Wesley Church, Nelson and Burrard. Tickets at Banyen Books 604 737-8858.

An ongoing Diamond Approach group meets in Vancouver. For information, call 604 301-9903. Visit www.ahalmaas.com.

Why so many wars?

THE ENTRENCHMENT OF HEGEMONY

by Bo Filter

Michael Moore brings down hard the hammer of class warfare in the final moments of his latest film, Fahrenheit 9/11. He reminds viewers that the pretext of staging an attack on one's own country to reaffirm hegemony is nothing new in history, but worse, a perpetual practice of entrenched aristocracies. In case anyone fails to understand which side of the fence Bush sits, Moore shows televised footage of Bush bragging amongst the elite that he is proud to be one of them.

Throughout history, aristocracies have used all forms of guile to maintain their position of privilege. Pretexts, by definition, galvanize public support, and they work specifically because the masses are unwilling to forego their blind faith in their leaders, rejecting the idea, as preposterous, that they, themselves, could be tricked into waging a war of aggression.

To this day, most people do not believe that the sinking of the Lusitania in 1916 was used to galvanize US support to enter World War I. Nor do they believe that Pearl Harbor was put deliberately in danger by an act of war, the prior blockading of the Strait of Malacca, cutting off Japan from its crucial supply of oil. Hitler burned down the Reichstag in a move to declare Marshall law and close down democracy, what the new Patriot Act is positioned to do in the States.

People tragically forget that democracy is anathema to aristocracy. Rulers need followers and whipping the masses into war fever for imperial purposes is as old as Caesar: "Beware the leader who bangs the drums of war in order to whip the citizenry into a patriotic fervor, for patriotism is indeed a double-edged sword. It both emboldens the blood, just as it narrows the mind. And when the drums of war have reached a fever pitch and the blood boils with hate and the mind has closed, the leader will have no need in seizing the rights of the citizenry. Rather, the citizenry, infused with fear and blinded by patriotism, will offer up all of their rights unto the leader and gladly so. How do I know? For this is what I have done. And I am Caesar."

In the recent past, leaders still bragged about the success of their manipulations. At the Nuremberg trials, Hermann Goering explained: " … the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger."

Detractors want us to believe that such trickery is all in the past. Instead, stealth has gone underground. With today's $1 billion a year media spin corporations, no one can admit to this, like the $10 million sell-job of the first Gulf war to the US public by faking the event of Iraqi soldiers taking children out of incubators and leaving them on the floor to die. This was spun so convincingly by the tearful daughter of a Kuwaiti ambassador, and sponsored by the Republican Party which gave the public relations contract to Hill and Knowlton, headquartered in the same building in Washington.

With 9/11, Bush could play a trump card, "You're either with us or you're with the terrorists." Quickly, the Patriot Act memorializes this affront on open democratic discussion. For follow-up, the corporate media spin constantly conditions the public to equate dissent with treason, creating two distinct camps of "good versus evil" in the US. According to ancient class warfare, the elite must divide the people against each other, arming the right-wing supporters of monarchy to suppress the masses. The historical record of the US aristocracy is no different. In every US elite-sponsored totalitarian country, critics and protesters are massacred, but first a national emergency is customarily declared with a clause that elections be postponed indefinitely. This is why an alleged Bin Laden attack is imminent. A finely tuned pretext will see Bush in the White House come January. The one thing that could stop him is that the public somehow starts to draw the connections between Bush and the Saudi elite. Hats off to Michael Moore for doing his part.

Bo Filter is author of the newly released book: The Cause of Wars and Aggression www.globaljusticepublishing.com

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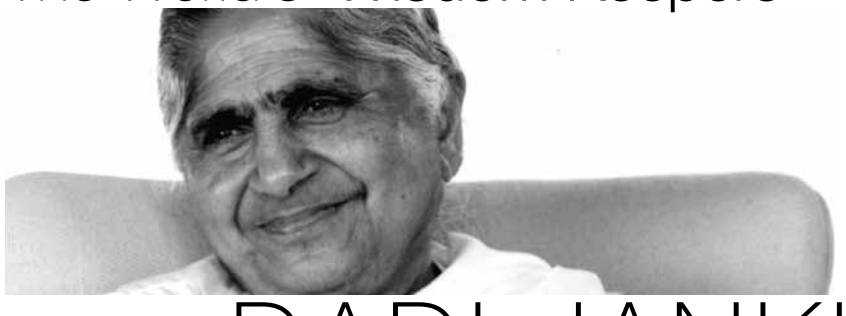

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Making democracy work better

by Scott Adams

The non-partisan BC Citizens' Assembly held public meetings in 50 towns and cities throughout the province during May and June to listen to suggestions on how to improve the provincial electoral system.

Two people from each of the 79 ridings form the assembly. The first public meeting, held May 3 in Vancouver, was attended by nine presenters, 20 assembly members and about 100 members of the public.

The assembly's third phase occurs this fall when members will either endorse the current system or propose a specific alternative, which will go to a referendum during the next provincial election on May 17, 2005. If voters endorse changes, referendum results will then be implemented in time for the 2009 election.

The existing first-past-the-post winner-takes-all system so completely distorts the true vote on election day that it should be changed. The citizens' assembly must present its final version of the report to the attorney general no later than December 15, 2004 for tabling in the legislature.

The existing first-past-the-post winner-takes-all system so completely distorts the true vote on election day that it should be changed.

A very well organized non-partisan group based in Toronto is publicizing, promoting and coordinating small independent groups working to change our out-dated electoral system both at the national level and in the provinces and territories. Contact Fair Vote Canada, 26 Maryland Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M4C 5C9, 416 410-4034 info@fairvotecanada.org, or www.fairvotecanada.org. The BC Citizens' Assembly can be reached at 2288 - 555 W. Hastings St., PO Box 12118, Vancouver, BC, V6B 4N6, 1-866-667-1232 toll free, in Vancouver 604 660-1232, www.citizensassembly.bc.ca. The Free Your Vote campaign address is Box 130, Gibsons BC, V0N 1V0, info@freeyourvote.bc.ca or www.freeyourvote.bc.ca.

Scott Adams is the author of several books on social, economic and political issues and founder of Habitat Canada, a federal political party. He intends to re-establish his party under its new name, the Prosperity Party of Canada, Box 612, 1027 Davie St., Vancouver, BC, V6E 4L2, 604 682-3269 ext 7058.

Breathing for your life

HEALTH

by Claire Maisonneuve

Inhale deeply, hold and exhale.

Although proper breathing is so fundamental and transformative, its power to improve health is often completely overlooked by most mental health professionals. It is something that's available to us immediately, costs no money, requires no prescriptions, no needles, has no side effects and always keeps us in control. It only requires a few minutes per day.

Considering that breathing is something we do all the time, an estimated 22,000 breaths a day, it seems worth exploring the power and impact this function has on our health and well being.

Proper breathing, in my experience, is unquestionably one of the most simple, ancient and effective strategies used to improve our lives and alleviate stress or anxiety.

When we suffer from ongoing stress and anxiety, we experience something called disordered breathing, also called upper chest breathing. Disordered breathing means that we are breathing too fast, too shallow and too high in the chest. Generally, it keeps the body tense, the heart working faster than it needs to and makes it impossible to experience a sense of complete deep relaxation.

Disordered breathing is generally maintained by negative thought patterns that include thoughts of worry, nervousness and fear, such as "What if I can't make it? what if I fail? what if something bad happens? what if I get hurt? what if I lose someone?" as well as "I should have, I could have, I must" or "I shouldn't have said that, I should know this by now, I could have done a better job, I must never embarrass myself."

These thoughts create feelings of fear, guilt or despair that in turn causes muscle tension. This includes restriction of the diaphragm, the main muscle used in proper breathing. Disordered breathing patterns in turn sustain our thoughts of worry, fear and nervousness. It's a vicious cycle and it must be interrupted through our own conscious effort. One of the most powerful techniques to break this cycle is to change our breathing patterns because our breath is ultimately linked with our minds. Think about how you breathe when you suddenly become anxious, fearful or angry. The very first thing that changes when our thoughts and emotions change is our breathing patterns.

In addition, breathing is a function that is both voluntary and involuntary, or conscious and unconscious. If we don't think about it, we'll breathe anyway. When we focus on it we can influence its rhythm.

You can test your own breathing by looking in the mirror. As you take your deepest and most powerful breath in, watch if your whole upper chest and torso move up. See if your shoulders lift significantly on the inhalation and drop on exhalation. Notice if the abdominal area or belly contract as the chest rises on the inhalation. If this happens, then you have witnessed upper chest breathing.

This is a sure contributor to high levels of stress and anxiety.

When this type of upper chest breathing happens, we struggle to take a deep breath in, and when we do, it never feels fully satisfying. You can also test the speed of your breathing by counting how many breaths per minute you take.

At 10-12 breaths per minute you are breathing in a healthy and relaxed manner, 12-16 breaths are still within the norm while over 16 breaths means that the body is in a state of hyper vigilance and hyper alertness. Taking 16 breaths or more per minute intensifies and sustains levels of stress and anxiety and will, over time, tax the immune system.

Disordered breathing is also responsible for much of the tension we experience. The problem is that when we breathe from the upper chest we are using what's called the secondary respiratory muscles, which are located around the shoulders, neck, jaw and face. These muscles are delicate and should only be used in case of sudden threat because they tire more easily than the primary respiratory muscles that include the diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

The diaphragm, which is a sheet-like muscle that lies horizontally in the body, is the main or primary muscle we should be using when we breathe. It sits just below the lungs and heart and separates the chest from the abdomen.

When we breathe properly there is an obvious and powerful movement of the rib cage. In disordered breathing we use the secondary respiratory muscles far more often than we should. The result is tension in the neck, jaw, face and shoulders, often followed by headaches and other neuromuscular problems. By changing our breathing patterns alone, we can experience significant and dramatic relief from this tension.

When this pattern of fast, shallow breathing, high in the chest, is maintained over long periods of time, it leads to what's known as hyperventilation which means moving more air in and out of the chest than the body can handle. If we can't breathe in fully, then we can't breathe out fully. So we try breathing more quickly to make up the lack of oxygen.

Hyperventilation is what anxious and stressed-out people do lots of, and this in turn affects all major systems of the body, neurological, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular. That's why people with stress and anxiety frequently suffer from rapid heart beat, chest pains, tingling, prickling or numbing sensations, dizziness, lightheadedness poor concentration, sleep disturbances, physical and mental restlessness, bowel problems or frequent sighing.

Of course we don't go to our doctors complaining of our breathing or saying we are hyperventilating. We only see our breathing difficulties as a symptom of something else.

Because the powerful effects of our

continued on page 19

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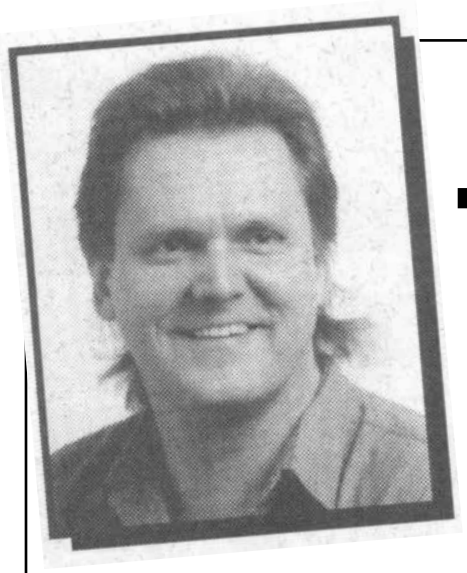

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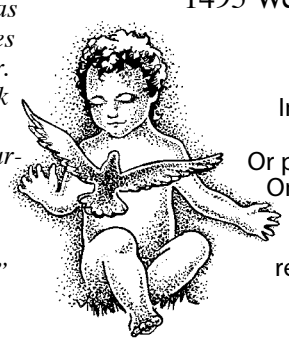

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VIFF changing world

FILMS WORTH WATCHING

by Robert Alstead

Call it the Michael Moore factor, or if you like the George Dubya phenomenon, but it seems like there's never been a greater hunger for hard-hitting political documentary than there is now. As Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11 takes off into the box office stratosphere (it has grossed $116 million in the US alone at the time of writing), other documentary features have been coming to the fore, like Control Room, which looks at the Iraq war through the prism of Arab television station Al Jazeera, or Outfoxed, the op-ed lambasting Rupert Murdoch's Fox news channel. The latter doc has been in such demand that it is making the unusual move into mainstream US theatres after its DVD release. Usually it's the other way round.

Alan Franey, artistic director of the Vancouver International Film Festival, is clearly encouraged by the trend as he girds himself for the city's annual movie marathon running September 23 to October 8. As well as its familiar strands of Asian, Canadian, French and international drama, VIFF, as it did last year, will carry around 100 documentaries, almost a third of the total festival program.

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Documentary has long been a staple of VIFF, and been well received by audiences here. Michael Moore was a virtual unknown back in 1989 when VIFF-goers voted his first documentary Roger and Me most popular film (it won the equivalent award at the Toronto International Film Festival in the same year reflecting a greater appetite for docs nationwide), and documentaries have topped the popularity charts for years.

"We want to further grow that part of the festival," says Franey, who this year brings a strand of activist documentaries under the banner Changing the World on topics as diverse as Iraq, genetic engineering, terrorism, globalization and the environment.

"There is such an obvious, urgent need for people to get a handle on the issues of today," explains Franey. "There's a growing sense of alarm at our direction and we are hearing more pessimism from people on all sides of the political fence and all parts of the world. So I think that very much our zeitgeist is a sense, a need to know and connect the dots, I believe, in a very different way than during the sixties."

Among films that Franey is particularly excited about is the international premiere of The World According to Bush (Le Monde Selon Bush) by French director William Karel, which features original interviews with among others author Norman Mailer, weapons inspector Hans Blix, Secretary of State Colin Powell and Pentagon advisor Richard Perle. The film didn't premiere at the Cannes Film Festival because festival artistic director Thierry Frémaux didn't want to appear anti-Bush by showing it alongside Fahrenheit 9/11. Franey says that the two films are very different, although both are highly critical.

"This is more scholarly, investigative journalism that packs a punch whereas Michael Moore is inventing a form that is kind of activist, in-yer-face, gadfly filmmaking," says Franey.

Also look out for Salaam Pax, aka The Baghdad Blogger, who will be bringing his video reports from Iraq. Salaam Pax rose to fame with his weblogs from the Iraqi capital throughout the coalition's offensive. He now writes for The Guardian newspaper and provides video segments to the BBC. "He didn't get a lot of attention in North America, it was mostly a British phenomenon," says Franey. "He's going to be presenting all the clips that he broadcast plus some new pieces that haven't been broadcast yet."

The Middle East also continues to be a focal point for filmmakers with a new documentary on the Israeli Palestine barrier, called The Wall. "It's one of the most cinematic films on the conflict in the Middle East. A real kind of immersive documentary where you really feel the physical, geographical, psychological barrier created by the wall. And it is very smart at folding points of view together for maximum irony."

Other docs Franey singles out for attention are Israeli filmmaker Yoav Shamir's Checkpoint, which presents both the Israeli soldiers and Palestinians as victims, and Emmanuel Hamon's excellent Selves and Others: A Portrait of Edward Said, where the late Palestinian-American offers a fresh perspective on the conflict between Arab and Jew.

Franey believes that watching these films should be a different experience from watching the evening news or even reading good journalism. "For an extended period of time you are allowed a higher order of insight," he says. And maybe that newfound understanding will help the world become a better place.

Tickets and info from www.viff.org. Visa charge-by-phone line at 604 685-8297, open noon to 7 pm. Cash sales begin September 11. Advance ticket outlets; the Pacific Centre Kiosk (Granville and Georgia) and City Square Mall (Cambie and 12th, mezzanine level). Festival information, 604 683-FILM (3456), 9 am to 9 pm.

Robert Alstead writes for www.iofilm.ca

Death and the eternal

STILLNESS SPEAKS

by Eckhart Tolle

When you walk through a forest that has not been tamed and interfered with by man, you will see not only abundant life all around you, but you will also encounter fallen trees and decaying trunks, rotting leaves and decomposing matter at every step. Wherever you look, you will find death as well as life.

Upon closer scrutiny, however, you will discover that the decomposing tree trunk and rotting leaves not only give birth to new life, but are full of life themselves. Microorganisms are at work. Molecules are rearranging themselves. So death isn't to be found anywhere. There is only the metamorphosis of life forms. What can you learn from this?

Death is not the opposite of life. Life has no opposite. The opposite of death is birth. Life is eternal.

~

Sages and poets throughout the ages have recognized the dreamlike quality of human existence - seemingly so solid and real and yet so fleeting that it could dissolve at any moment.

At the hour of your death, the story of your life may, indeed, appear to you like a dream that is coming to an end. Yet even in a dream there must be an essence that is real. There must be a consciousness in which the dream happens; otherwise, it would not be.

That consciousness - does the body create it or does consciousness create the dream of body, the dream of somebody?

Why have most of those who went through a near-death experience lost their fear of death? Reflect upon this.

~

Of course you know you are going to die, but that remains a mere mental concept until you meet death "in person" for the first time: through a serious illness or an accident that happens to you or someone close to you, or through the passing away of a loved one, death enters your life as the awareness of your own mortality.

Most people turn away from it in fear, but if you do not flinch and face the fact that your body is fleeting and could dissolve at any moment, there is some degree of disidentification, however slight, from your own physical and psychological form, the "me." When you see and accept the impermanent nature of all life forms, a strange sense of peace comes upon you.

Through facing death, your consciousness is freed to some extent from identification with form. This is why in some Buddhist traditions, the monks regularly visit the morgue to sit and meditate among the dead bodies.

There is still a widespread denial of death in Western cultures. Even old people try not to speak or think about it, and dead bodies are hidden away. A culture that denies death inevitably becomes shallow and superficial, concerned only with the external form of things. When death is denied, life loses its depth. The possibility of knowing who we are beyond name and form, the dimension of the transcendent, disappears from our lives because death is the opening into that dimension.

~

People tend to be uncomfortable with endings, because every ending is a little death. That's why in many languages, the word for "good-bye" means "see you again."

Whenever an experience comes to an end - a gathering of friends, a vacation, your children leaving home - you die a little death. A "form" that appeared in your consciousness as that experience dissolves. Often this leaves behind a feeling of emptiness that most people try hard not to feel, not to face.

the decomposing tree trunk and rotting leaves not only give birth to new life, but are full of life themselves. Microorganisms are at work. Molecules are rearranging themselves. So death isn't to be found anywhere. There is only the metamorphosis of life forms.

If you can learn to accept and even welcome the endings in your life, you may find that the feeling of emptiness that initially felt uncomfortable turns into a sense of inner spaciousness that is deeply peaceful.

By learning to die daily in this way, you open yourself to Life.

~

Most people feel that their identity, their sense of self, is something incredibly precious that they don't want to lose. That is why they have such fear of death.

It seems unimaginable and frightening that "I" could cease to exist. But you confuse that precious "I" with your name and form and a story associated with it. That "I" is no more than a temporary formation in the field of consciousness.

As long as that form identity is all you know, you are not aware that this preciousness is your own essence, your innermost sense of I Am, which is consciousness itself. It is the eternal in you - and that's the only thing you cannot lose.

~

Whenever any kind of deep loss occurs in your life - such as loss of possessions, your home, a close relationship; or loss of your reputation, job, or physical abilities - something inside you dies. You feel diminished in your sense of who you are. There may also be a certain disorientation. "Without this...who am I?"

When a form that you had unconsciously identified with as part of yourself leaves you or dissolves, that can be extremely painful. It leaves a hole, so to speak, in the fabric of your existence.

When this happens, don't deny or ignore the pain or the sadness that you feel. Accept that it is there. Beware of your mind's tendency to construct a story around that loss in which you are assigned the role of victim. Fear, anger, resentment, or self-pity are the emotions that go with that role. Then become aware of what lies behind those emotions as well as behind the mind-made story: that hole, that empty space. Can you face and accept that strange sense of emptiness? If you do, you may find that it is no longer a fearful place. You may be surprised to find peace emanating from it.

Whenever death occurs, whenever a life form dissolves, God, the formless and unmanifested, shines through the opening left by the dissolving form. That is why the most sacred thing in life is death. That is why the peace of God can come to you through the contemplation and acceptance of death.

~

How short-lived every human experience is, how fleeting our lives. Is there anything that is not subject to birth and death, anything that is eternal?

Consider this: if there were only one color, let us say blue, and the entire world and everything in it were blue, then there would be no blue. There needs to be something that is not blue so that blue can be recognized; otherwise, it would not "stand out," would not exist.

In the same way, does it not require something that is not fleeting and impermanent for the fleetingness of all things to be recognized? In other words: if everything, including yourself, were impermanent, would you even know it? Does

the fact that you are aware of and can witness the short-lived nature of all forms, including your own, not mean that there is something in you that is not subject to decay?

When you are twenty, you are aware of your body as strong and vigorous; sixty years later, you are aware of your body as weakened and old. Your thinking too may have changed from when you were twenty, but the awareness that knows that your body is young or old or that your thinking has changed has undergone no change. That awareness is the eternal in you - consciousness itself. It is the formless One Life. Can you lose It? No, because you are It.

~

Some people become deeply peaceful and almost luminous just before they die, as if something is shining through the dissolving form.

Sometimes it happens that very ill or old people become almost transparent, so to speak, in the last few weeks, months, or even years of their lives. As they look at you, you may see a light shining through their eyes. There is no psychological suffering left. They have surrendered and so the person, the mind-made egoic "me," has already dissolved. They have "died before they died" and found the deep inner peace that is the realization of the deathless within themselves.

~

To every accident and disaster there is a potentially redemptive dimension that we are usually unaware of.

The tremendous shock of totally unexpected, imminent death can have the effect of forcing your consciousness completely out of identification with form. In the last few moments before physical death, and as you die, you then experience yourself as consciousness free of form. Suddenly, there is no more fear, just peace and a knowing that "all is well" and that death is only a form dissolving. Death is then recognized as ultimately illusory - as illusory as the form you had identified with as yourself.

~

Death is not an anomaly or the most dreadful of all events as modern culture would have you believe, but the most natural thing in the world, inseparable from and just as natural as its polarity - birth. Remind yourself of this when you sit with a dying person.

It is a great privilege and a sacred act to be present at a person's death as a witness and companion.

When you sit with a dying person, do not deny any aspect of that experience. Do not deny what is happening and do not deny your feelings. The recognition that there is nothing you can do may make you feel helpless, sad, or angry. Accept what you feel. Then go one step further: accept that there is nothing you can do, and accept it completely. You are not in control. Deeply surrender to every aspect of that experience, your feelings as well as any pain or discomfort the dying person may be experiencing. Your surrendered state of consciousness and the stillness that comes with it will greatly assist the dying person and ease their transition. If words are called for, they will come out of the stillness within you. But they will be secondary.

With the stillness comes the benediction: peace.

Excerpted from Stillness Speaks, *by Eckhart Tolle, $17 hardcover. Published by New World Library, toll free 1-800-972-6657 Ext. 52*

www.newworldlibrary.com

Protecting diversity

SCIENCE MATTERS

by David Suzuki

A massive deep-sea expedition in the North Atlantic recently uncovered hundreds of species of fish and squid, including some that appear to be new to science. The expedition made headlines, but some readers may have been left wondering, "So what?"

The two-month international expedition netted some 80,000 specimens from waters up to several kilometers deep. Scientists were thrilled with their discoveries, which included a variety of observed strange phenomena, from reef-building cold-water coral, to rings of planktonic organisms more than 10 kilometres wide.

It's all part of a 10-year census of marine life. But at the cost of more than $1 billion, some might say the price seems a bit high to find a few new fish. So what makes this kind of work so important?

Well, beyond the simple thrill of gaining knowledge for its own sake, understanding life diversity on the planet and how it interacts is vital to humanity. In nature, diversity rules. A diversity of life has proven to be a key element of evolution and the survival of life on Earth. The more we understand about diversity in nature, and how to protect it, the better off we will be.

Faced with a growing population of some 6.5 billion, and an explosive rise in the demand for energy and natural resources, the planet's life diversity is under assault at all levels - from the number of species on the planet (species diversity), to the number of different populations within a species (population diversity), to the variation within populations (genetic diversity). Although most of our focus tends to be on species diversity, population and genetic diversity are also extremely important to the health of an ecosystem.

A recent University of Toronto study for example, found that genetic diversity within a plant species can have the same effect as species diversity when it comes to influencing the variety of life in an ecological community. For the study, researchers planted clusters of evening primrose at field sites, some of which were a monoculture of one genetic variation, others of which contained a number of genetic variations. They found that the most diverse clusters attracted 17 percent more species of insects, spiders and other arthropods.

A recent study in Costa Rica found that preserving forest fragments around coffee plantations boosts crop yields and increases income. Researchers found that the forest offered a refuge for bee species, which helped pollinate coffee plants. Plants closer to the forest received more pollen from these bees, more often, than did plants further away.

Again, however, the skeptic might ask, "Great, so greater genetic diversity means more bugs, so what?"

Well, on a large scale, this diversity of life on Earth underpins many of the ecosystem services we need to survive. Microorganisms in our soil, for example, help make it fertile, while microorganisms in our oceans provide us with the oxygen we need to breathe. For humans, these services are essential. They are priceless. Preventing the degradation of these services is therefore essential.

Of course, humans don't set out to harm ecosystem services. Instead, we do harm on an incremental scale, site by site, ecosystem by ecosystem. That makes the impacts less obvious, especially when we don't understand how species and processes interact with one another in the first place.

Fortunately, some ecosystem services take place at a scale small enough to measure with a dollar value. A recent study in Costa Rica found that preserving forest fragments around coffee plantations boosts crop yields and increases income. Researchers found that the forest offered a refuge for bee species, which helped pollinate coffee plants. Plants closer to the forest received more pollen from these bees, more often, than did plants further away. As a result, plants near the forest yielded 20 percent more beans.

So what's the big deal about finding fish in the middle of the ocean? It may not have been in the news stories, but it's all part of the big puzzle of understanding the diversity of life on Earth, how we benefit from it and how we can protect it. And that is a pretty big deal indeed.

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Ecotopia

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by Guy Dauncey

To all you newcomers fresh off the bus, plane or beater, looking around our great cities of Vancouver and Victoria, welcome to ecotopia. (aka lala land, land of milk and homegrown)

Can't you tell you're in ecotopia? Don't the cars, smog, consumerism, garbage and postcards of pristine unlogged mountains tell you it's ecotopia?

Oops! We thought you wouldn't notice. It's in our minds, you see, this vision of ecotopia. If you're careful, you can spot it as you walk down Robson Street, mind reading the people you pass. "Blank, blank, shopping, hotdogs, blank, late for work, blank, blank, ecotopia!" See? You nearly missed her. That middle-aged woman, walking quietly down the sidewalk. There's another. That 15-year-old, playing hackysack with his friends. They come in all shapes, sizes and ages, our ecotopians.

Inside, they're dreaming of a world where everyone lives surrounded by clean water, pristine forests and cities that have been transformed into clusters of car-free ecovillages. They dream of forests where there's no more clearcutting, energy that comes from the sun, wind and tides and oceans where the orcas no longer have PCBs and fire retardants in their bodies. They dream of businesses that are based on ethics and social responsibility. They dream that this land has become magical, that the spirit of nature rules and love and delight fill the air. Inside, they're pulsing with hope and determination.

Some of our ecotopians live in a lonely world; they think they're the only ones. Too much of the homegrown, I'd say. For the rest, there are so many projects where people are working to turn their dreams into a reality, it's hard to know where to begin.

there are so many projects where people are working to turn their dreams into a reality, it's hard to know where to begin.

Let me give you a quick tour. In Vancouver, at 227 Abbott Street in Gastown, you'll find Western Canada Wilderness Committee, where a host of people work to protect our environment; you'll often find them trail building, or holding vigils in our parks and forests. In Victoria, they're at 651 Johnson Street. www.wildernesscommittee.org

Over at 2150 Maple Street, you'll find the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation, where staff and volunteers are busy recycling, stopping pesticide use, protecting the seas and cleaning the air. They've also got a great guide to other ecotopian groups.

www.spec.bc.ca/greenpages

If it's cycling, greenways and transport issues you're interested in, head over to 822-510 West Hastings, for the offices of Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, where they have big visions of a Vancouver with way fewer cars. In Victoria, bike over to the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition's resource centre, at 1056A North Park St., which is the hub for all things spokey. www.best.bc.ca and www.gvcc.bc.ca

Want to join the Car Share Cooperative you've heard so much about? Go straight to the Cooperative Auto Network. www.cooperativeauto.net. If it's Victoria you're in, check out the Victoria Car Share Coop. www.victoriacarshare.com

Or maybe you're interested in green buildings, architecture and sustainable communities? Then it's the EcoDesign Resource Society you'll be wanting, as your introduction to everything green. www.vcn.bc.ca/edrs

Are you vegan, or vegetarian? No problem. In Vancouver, it's Earth Save Canada you want, at www.earthsave.bc.ca. It holds monthly organic dine-outs, potlucks and even veggie speed-dating nights. If it's organic veggie romance you're after, that's the group. In Victoria, you'll find the same with VIVA, the Vancouver Island Vegetarian Association. www.islandveg.com

Maybe your ecotopia is filled with organic tomatoes and winter greens. Then it's Farm Folk City Folk you want www.ffcf.bc.ca, or maybe City Farmer, for dirty fingers, cob oven cooking, composting and worms www.cityfarmer.org. If it's home delivery of BC's best organic produce you're after, then check out Small Potatoes Urban Delivery www.spud.ca. This company is as green as they come.

Is it the vision of wind and tidal energy and the coming solar revolution that fascinates you? Then check out the BC Sustainable Energy Association, dreaming of BC in which all our energy comes from clean, renewable and efficient sources. www.bcsea.org

For environmental information, you've made a good start with Common Ground magazine. You could also look at Shared Vision, EcoNews at www.earthfuture.com and the Watershed Sentinel from beautiful Cortes Island www.watershedsentinel.ca And finally, the people at the David Suzuki Foundation, 219-2211 West 4 Ave. www.davidsuzuki.org and the Sierra Club, with its BC office in Victoria at 304-733 Johnson St. and local groups in Victoria and Vancouver www.bc.sierraclub.ca

That's just the quickest of introductions. Once you know where to look, you'll find our province to be an absolute warren of willing wabbits, working away to weave their magic into our province's soul. Welcome to our spirit world.

Guy Dauncey is a visionary and activist who lives in Victoria. He is the author of Earthfuture: Stories From a Sustainable World and other titles. www.earthfuture.com

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Chump change and fairy tales

GREED PART 2

Story and art by Geoff Olson

Greed drives the desire for profit at any cost. Envy is a mainstay of the fashion industry, and marketing as a whole. Anger is subtly exploited in the Army of One fantasies of video games and recruitment advertisements. Pride fuels the "high self-esteem" bandwagon. In the era of hypercapitalism, these and most of the other so-called deadly sins have been rehabilitated by the market as positive, even praiseworthy, states of mind. "Sin" has been spun. Hence, what I call The Deadly Spins.

A few years back, a teacher friend shared an anecdote about baseball player Jackie Robinson with his high school students. Signed in 1947 to the Brooklyn Dodgers, Robinson was called one day for a meeting with the managers, who offered to increase his wage to what would then be considered astronomical levels. In my friend's telling of this tale, Robinson turned the offer down because he thought his performance didn't yet warrant such a vast sum. My friend was alarmed by his students' take on this; they didn't regard Robinson as a hero for his stand, but a "chump."

We have taught our children well. After decades of obsessing over the incomes of super athletes and other pop-culture celebrities - including corporate CEOs - money has become the arbiter of all that's noble and worthy. Greed is seen as natural and true to the human competitive spirit.

It's difficult to move "off the grid" in a culture of greed that is so total. You may not be a player on the stock market, but your pension fund probably is. In the US, a great many people are banking on the market for their retirement. In a recent New Yorker cartoon illustrating Dante's guide into the underworld, Virgil points down to hell's inner circle. The damned hurry across the streets, looking up with worried expressions at numbers playing across huge screens. Not surprisingly, hell resembles Times Square, with pedestrians watching the performance of Dow and Nasdaq. The cartoon perfectly captures the volatile nature of finance in a stock market untethered to anything so mundane as real profits and company assets. In the late nineties and into the 2000s, investors were - and are - caught up in a speculative bubble that has only recently showed itself for what it's always been: a consensual hallucination. (Which is not the same as saying the financial market is unreal, only that the value of stocks and currencies are what we believe them to be, expressed through buy-and-sell.)

The nineties boom was largely a mirage, though certainly one with effects in the real world. It was fueled by a metaphysical belief in the power of money. According to mythologist Joseph Campbell, in medieval times the tallest buildings were the churches. By the nineteenth century, they were superceded by the seats of government. By the late twentieth century, the tallest structures on the horizon belonged to the houses of finance and commerce. This succession of pinnacles, from the Holy Roman Empire to the New World Disorder, perfectly captures the ability of money to mold the world to its purposes. From Chartres to the Sears Tower, we've always been rendering unto Caesar, just under different banners.

In its ability to transform itself across currencies, and finance anything from a trip to Disneyland to a voyage to the moon, money is rightly regarded as something magical: as powerful (and weightless) as sunlight in its capacity to make things grow, yet as unpredictable and dangerous as the weather. A common theme in Celtic fairy tales involves a villager who returns from fairyland with a sack of gold coins. In spite of the warning not to look into the sack before he arrives home, the visitor invariably takes a peek. The cash turns out to be coal - as deflated as the wheelbarrows full of Deutschmarks that German consumers pushed around after the collapse of the Weimar banking system.

A similar ambivalence about money is found in most of the world religions. In the Gospels, Jesus recognizes money as a competitive authority. In the words of writer James Buchan, he understood that "in embodying happiness and reward in tangible, earthly form, money is more impressively heaven than heaven."

Aristotle, the Muslims and the medieval schoolmen were also deeply suspicious of money's capacity to grow through interest. The birth of money from money was seen as unnatural because the offspring resembled the parent. This fiscal cloning was seen as an affront to the natural order. As a result, the practice of money lending was left to the Jews - along with a net surplus of suspicion and resentment.

In spite of the biblical injunction that "the desire for money is the root of all evil," the Catholic church eventually made peace with money, and greed itself (You could buy your way into heaven, or even cover the passage of a dead relative who had sinned, by purchasing "indulgences" from clerics travelling door-to-door). It was money and credit, and the differing attitudes toward them, which fueled the great schisms of Calvinism and Lutheranism. In rejecting the greed of the Vatican, the Protestant movement endorsed the acquisition of money by the merchant class - as long as it was accomplished not in a spirit of greed, but for the glory of God.

In large part, this cultural endorsement powered mercantilism and its global explosion of western capital. But eventually, the Protestant angle on acquisitiveness was blown apart by money's radioactive properties. Writes media critic Mark Dery: "The Protestant work ethic and Puritan abstemiousness that ensure a tractable, reliable workforce are at odds with the consumer economy, whose wheels are greased by instant gratification and the seductive promise of a return to carefree adolescent, even infantile pleasures."

In the mad tilt-o-whirl of global investments and liquid capital we're all riding on, the triumphs of the consumer economy are easily visible: cheap food, constant entertainment and affordable clothing. Harder to imagine is the final accounting - not from some accountancy firm, but rather history itself. The ecological fallout alone from greed has to be worked into the equations.

The Protestant work ethic and Puritan abstemiousness that ensure a tractable, reliable workforce are at odds with the consumer economy, whose wheels are greased by instant gratification and the seductive promise of a return to carefree adolescent, even infantile pleasures.

To classical economists, the environment is an "externality." The same could be said of ethics, although British economist Maynard Keynes made a few token attempts to insert an ethical dimension into the political economy, by briefly but powerfully noting the corrosive forces of greed: "The love of money as a possession - as distinguished from the love of money as a means to the enjoyment and realities of life will be recognized for what it is, a somewhat disgusting morbidity, one of those semi-criminal, semi-pathological propensities which one hands over with a shudder to the specialists in mental disease."

For former Economist reporter James Buchan, attempting an ethical study of money that Keynes left unfinished, "money enters into the system of values, and then displaces all other values like the cuckoo the eggs in a nest."

In his book Frozen Desire, Buchan sums up the dark side of what the desire for money has brought to civilization. "For some time, in many places, money was thought to be bad, but it is now thought, on the whole, to be good. That inversion is the greatest to have occurred in the moral sentiments of the West. Desires that resisted incorporation into money turned pale and lost their power to convince: disinterested friendship, love and philanthropy became as suspect as the goals of once passionate wishes, honour and salvation. Miserliness, which places potential above actual gratification, had once seemed the disease of money ... gradually, it lost its pathology and became the condition of moral health."

Private virtues become public virtues, according to Buchan, "and the old private virtues - prudence, thrift, kindness - become public vices in the market economy." For Buchan, this is the great sadness at the heart of our civilization, "by using money, we convert our world into it." That includes community itself, in a culture "where all human relations are disrupted by money."

In our times, greed has been spun so hard it flies right off the page. And now, with the no-longer shocking revelations of the cooked accounting methods of Fortune 500 companies and the understanding of the debt-creation mechanism of "perpetual war for perpetual peace," the global market economy threatens to break apart like a mirage on a desert plain. Greed, the deadly spin, has got us here, and like the characters in The New Yorker cartoon, we watch the figures on the exchanges, nervously hoping money will continue to perform its miracle of endless replication.

For the system to work a little longer, there must be enough people who will continue to believe that 15 percent annual return is a portfolio's due, in spite of living on a finite Earth that will not sustain such increases, and that anyone who turns his back on a sure-fire "growth opportunity" is some species of fool. Or worse, "a chump."

Yet it's difficult to imagine how any culture can survive for long with dangerously high levels of personal credit fueled by fractional reserve banking. For civilization itself to evolve further, the rejection of greed will have to run deep into planetary culture and may involve rejecting the very premises of capital itself, which empowers the few at the expense of the many. We are on the knife's edge; having dreamed this rapacious world of greed into existence, we have to dream our way out again.

Geoff Olson is a Vancouver writer and political cartoonist. gefo@telus.net

continued from page 13
breathing are overlooked, we may be sent to various specialists, such as internists, neurologists and cardiologists. Frequently it results in a lack of abnormal findings. We may be prescribed tranquilizers, anti-depressants, anti anxiety or sleeping pills. Yet no one is paying attention to the impact of breathing.

Rapid, upper chest breathing is a normal response to sudden threat. It's one of the reactions of the fight or flight response, which is an instinctive, adaptive internal response to danger. So the first response to sudden stress is a change in our breathing patterns. But when we suffer from long-standing anxiety and stress, this rapid breathing or hyperventilation becomes a stable, ongoing feature. We are breathing as if we were in imminent danger, expecting something bad to happen at any moment or the other shoe to fall. This keeps us in what's called a constant state of hyper-alertness, hyper-arousal or hyper-vigilance.

The breath is an important indicator of what's happening in our thoughts and feelings, and it can have very real and distressing effects on the body. But consider this: If the breath is so powerful it can produce this range of negative symptoms, then surely it can also produce positive experiences in our minds and bodies. And if feelings are so connected to breathing, then it seems logical to conclude that if we learn to control our breathing then we can learn to control anxious and stressful states of mind. This is why it's so important to make contact with our breathing pattern to influence our well being.

When I first tell people that I'll teach them about breathing they're not usually impressed because after all they've been doing it their whole lives. Yet, most of my clients will agree that this is one of the most useful, constructive and healing practices they've learned in therapy. Because much of therapy is about trying to activate and stimulate the resources, strengths and abilities we have within us, the process of proper breathing is about re-stimulating inherently healthy breathing patterns that we had when we were first born.

Through awareness we can begin to remove the obstacles to proper breathing, and through practise we can rediscover and reactivate our natural capacities to breathe in ways that are satisfying and conducive to well being. The good news is that good breathing is never lost; it's only forgotten because of negative habits. Just like our capacity for peace, joy and happiness inside us is never lost, it's only unexplored or undeveloped. Through awareness and practise we can recover our ability to breathe fully and healthily.

My experience with people has convinced me beyond a doubt that to relieve anxiety and stress we must influence our breathing. By working with very simple methods to change our breathing patterns we can become centred, grounded and calm within. We develop our capacity to experience more positive energy that in turn gives a sense of vitality and pleasure in the body. The potential to feel vibrant and energized yet calm is not something we can get from a pill. It's something we must cultivate, using discipline and the power of awareness.

It is amazing how we are taught so much about the world, politics, geography, other people and the cosmos, yet so little about what's going on inside us, how to develop the powers of our mind as well as the ability to be calm and trust our bodies. Considering that these attributes ultimately carry us through life and determine the quality of our existence it seems reasonable to spend some time learning to cultivate them. One of the first steps in doing so is the concrete experience of working with breath. Freedom from stress can be just a few breaths away.

Once again, inhale deeply, hold, exhale fully and relax.

Claire Maisonneuve is a registered clinical counsellor and director of the Anxiety and Stress Relief Clinic in Vancouver 604 732-3930. Her CD on proper breathing for health will soon be released www.anxiety-andstressrelief.com

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CULTURE

Award winning domes developed in New Denver

by Elliott McLaughlin

In the middle of July my partner Kasia and I made our way to the charming village of New Denver, in the heart of the West Kootenays, to meet up with old friends. We were delighted to accept their invitation to stay at Villa Dome Quixote, a multiple award-winning monolithic dome lodge built from mill ends.

Driving into the picturesque town of New Denver from the south along Hwy 6, we slowed down at the town's only flashing traffic light. As we turned right onto Hwy 31A, the curves of Villa Dome Quixote came into view. At first sight the multi-domed structure is disarming; most think of Tolkein's shire and Hobbits. We were soon to discover it to be far more than that first impression.

The lodge complex consists of four interconnected monolithic domes as opposed to geodesic. The main entrance opens into a warm colourful reception area with a central staircase leading up to a spacious circular common room on the second floor. This spectacular area with no corners is 7.5 metres high. Curved, textured walls, beech flooring and rice paper lampshades create a sense of harmony and serenity. We would spend many enjoyable hours in this relaxing space.

We were both immediately taken with the interior design and decor of Dome Quixote. It is very contemporary; with great colours, lighting and furniture. Everything has clean modern lines creating a kind of elegant simplicity, with of course lots of gentle curves. The effect is comforting and womb-like. One must experience first hand the sense of space inside such a structure, intimate yet wide open. There are no TVs or radios and no outer stimuli save for well-selected ambient music.

Kootenay slate flooring of golden and rust hues meanders through curved hallways to a cedar sauna, large outdoor whirlpool area and two residential domes with 10 bedrooms. An adjoining spheroidal dome with hardwood flooring creates a beautiful space for workshops, meetings and celebrations. When standing near the geometric centre, the acoustics are exceptional, inviting one to chant.

After a tour, we check into our comfortable room with curved wall, dormer window, hardwood floors, cozy duvets and private washroom. Revived by a cup of organic green tea we prepared in the guest kitchen, we are eager to explore the town and its spectacular setting.

The heritage village of New Denver is situated on the shores of Slocan Lake, a pristine body of water flanked on its western shore by the spectacular Valhalla Wilderness Reserve and the New Denver Glacier. Strolling down the main street towards the lake, we discovered buildings dating back to the end of the nineteenth century. Like many of the West Kootenay towns, New Denver was originally a mining town and a thriving concern in the late 1800s. Now it is a quaint low-key village with eclectic shops, coffee houses, museums, beautiful lakeside parks and gardens and a developed network of hiking and cycling trails. The Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre with its Japanese gardens, and the Kohan Reflection Garden makes you think about Canada's history. Local galleries and the bustling colourful Friday market, from June through October, are visible signs of an active community of artists, artisans and organic gardeners.

New Denver is surrounded by three provincial parks with spectacular hiking trails beckoning. Guests of Villa Dome Quixote will find New Denver a jumping off point for adventures to alpine meadows, snowfields, natural hot springs and ghost towns.

Slocan Lake with its undeveloped natural shoreline has excellent kayaking, canoeing, sailing and swimming. The non-motorized Galena Trail, a former narrow gauge rail line, passes within a kilometre of the lodge. One can cycle from the ghost town of Sandon to Carpenter Creek, along Slocan Lake past Summit Lake to Nakusp. A 15-minute drive east takes one to a narrow switchback road that climbs to a parking lot just below a ridge leading to Idaho Peak. From late June until the first snow, one can hike above the tree line, along the ridge amidst meadows full of alpine flowers while enjoying a spectacular 360-degree view of the valleys, lakes, snowfields and mountain ranges.

Nelson, recently rated as one of BC's top three cities for quality of living, is an hour and 20-minute drive from New Denver. We enjoyed a great day trip and drove the Selkirk loop south through the Slocan Valley to the hip heritage city of Nelson, then up Kootenay Lake to Ainsworth hot springs, Kaslo and back to New Denver. I used to own an old mining claim behind Ainsworth near a pro-

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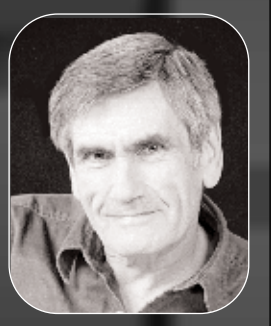
Nonviolent Communication



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Working Forest dropped

The BC Liberal government last month backed down from implementing its proposed Working Forest initiative after less than 1 percent of people at public forums over the last 18 months supported the plan. www.wildernesscommittee.org

They don't want garbage

Instead of trucking trash to the province's interior, the Vancouver region must become more responsible for waste by enforcing aggressive recycling, reuse and composting programs. www.commonground.ca

Sustainable better than GM

Resource-poor rural communities in Kenya are successfully using the "push-pull" program to control the stemborer, which causes an estimated loss of 15 percent of maize and other cereals. Kenya is one of the countries under intense pressure to adopt transgenic agriculture, which so far has been a big failure there. www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=4226

Four die at nuclear plant

A fatal accident killed four people in August at the Mihama nuclear power plant in Japan. There was no leak of radioactivity but it is the deadliest accident in a catalog of nuclear scandals in Japan. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3548192 www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20040812a3.htm

Serious pollution found

Imported GM canola seeds have been spilled around Kashima port in Ibaraki prefecture, and GM canola pollution has been spreading. According to an investigation in February 2003, western oilseed rape was confirmed at 23 out of 48 locations. www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=4224

Thais demand GM probe

Greenpeace campaigners in Thailand recently revealed that GM papaya has been grown illegally for at least 12 months. http://weblog.greenpeace.org/ge/archives/Map-contamination.jpg

Teflon sticking to Dupont

The US Environmental Protection Agency filed a complaint in July charging chemical and biotech giant DuPont for "withholding evidence of its own health and environmental concerns" about an important chemical used to manufacture Teflon. www.gmwatch.org/archive2.asp?arcid=4212

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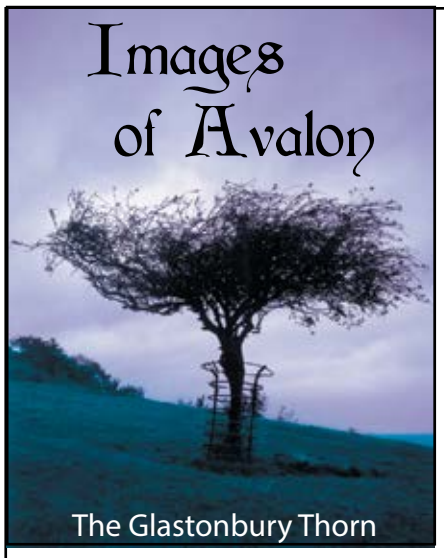

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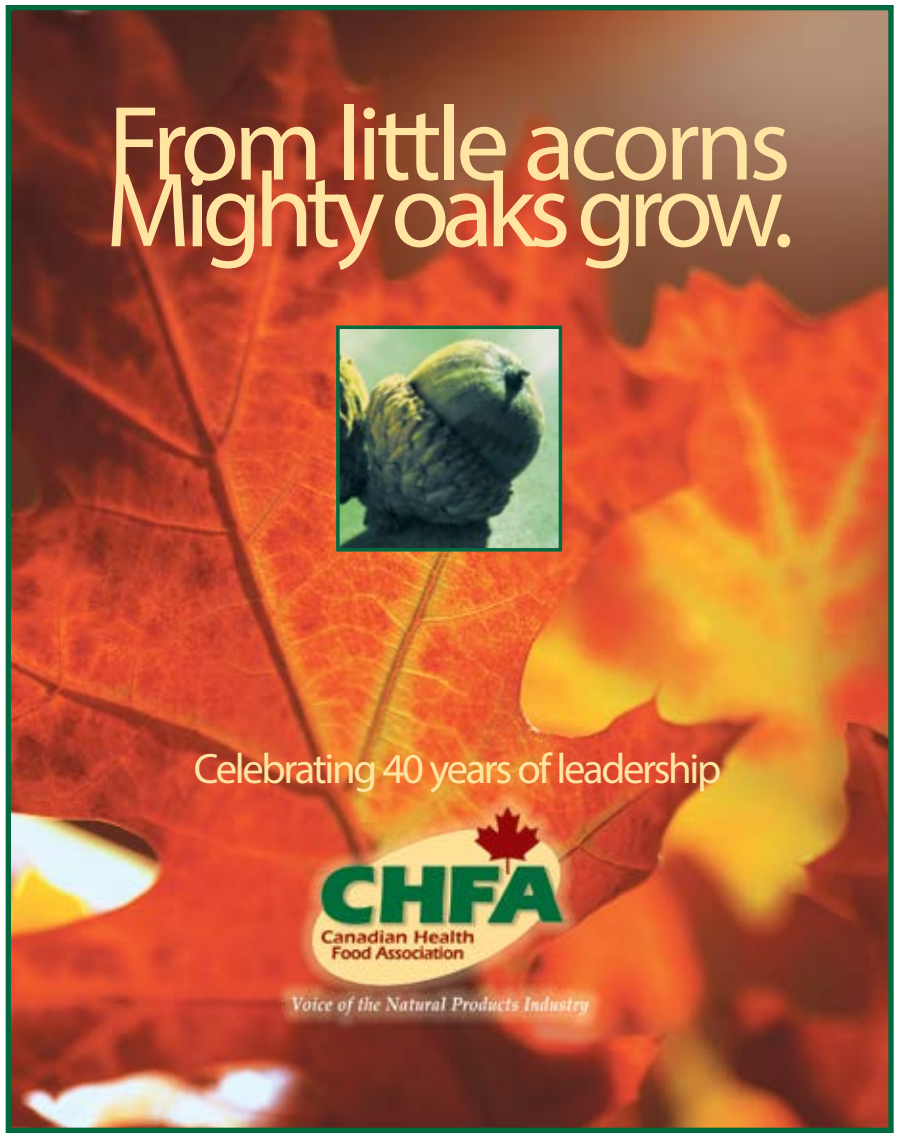

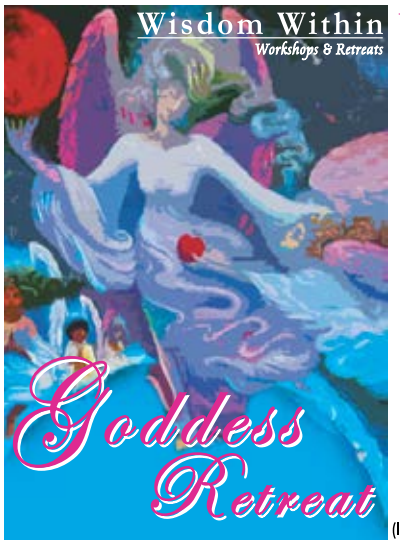

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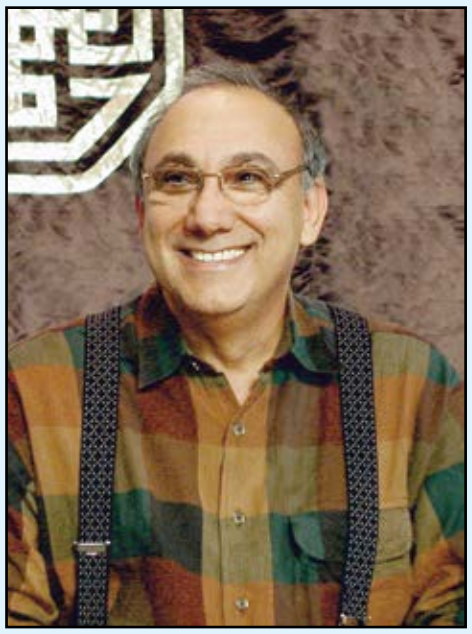

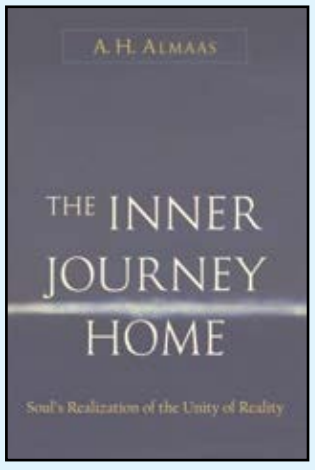

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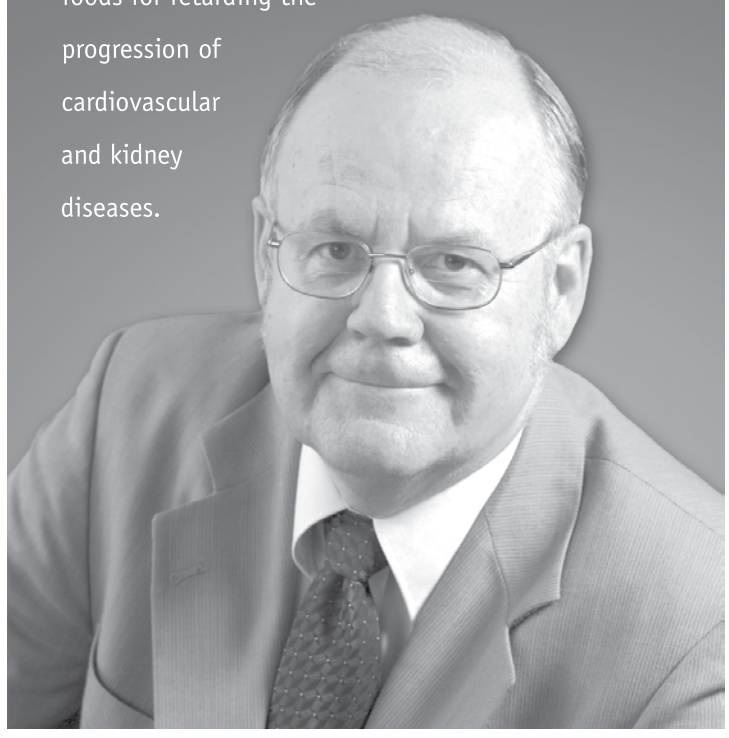

High tech in the backwoods

by Elliott McLaughlin

Villa Dome Quixote is a 500 square metre dome complex in New Denver that started out as a proof of concept for the Canadian wooden domes project (CWD) developed and implemented by Salah Eldeib. A professional engineer, Salah heads Altus Engineering Ltd. based in the same town.

Three spheroidal domes have the same 10 metre diameter and 5 metre rise, while the two-storey, paraboloid central dome has a diameter of 10 metres and a rise of 9 metres. Constructed as a prototype to develop and test a new form of structural engineering, Villa Dome Quixote now functions as a lodge and as an exhibition site for potential dome customers.

Meeting with Salah Eldeib is quite an experience. Born in Egypt and educated at Ain Shams University in Cairo and the University of British Columbia, Salah is passionate about these revolutionary wooden domes.

At the time of writing, Salah just received the Kootenay Association for Science and Technology innovator of the year award, and congratulations from Premier Campbell on "being recognized as a leading individual who has demonstrated innovation, leadership and sound business practices."

Salah and his company have secured numerous prestigious awards for the Canadian wooden domes project including the 2003 environmental award from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC for outstanding achievement in environmental engineering in the design, construction and monitoring category. He received the BC and Yukon 2003 regional finalist award for sustainable development given jointly by the National Research Council and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. An independent committee appointed by the National Research Council chose Altus Engineering Ltd., along with 31 other Canadian companies, as innovators of national significance.

Salah was inspired to develop these dome systems out of concern for the environment and interest in reducing waste in the timber industry. The domes are framed from scrap wood less than 14 cm long. They reduce construction waste by up to 85 percent. Salah's philosophy is to make use of other people's waste materials in addition to reducing his construction waste.

As the engineering is different from conventional stick frame buildings, the CWDs required testing to ensure the structural integrity. Helmut Prion, professor of civil engineering at UBC, oversaw the load testing of the prototype and under his supervision, testing and analysis of the systems continues. This fall, a 7.5 metre dome will be tested to failure in the new UBC structural lab.

These dome buildings, which are suitable for a wide range of applications, are superior to standard frame construction in strength, durability and energy efficiency. They are suitable for residential and commercial buildings, industrial and public structures, arenas and stadiums as well as emergency and temporary shelters. They provide a wide range of choices of finishing materials to designers and specifiers.

a device that controls the shape of the dome at any point during construction was developed, and special scaffolding services the interior and exterior during the construction and finishing stages. Other innovative tools include a three dimensional saw and a machine designed to convert flat sheet metal into the shapes required to fit on the dome roof and to produce custom shaped flashing.

This type of wooden dome construction will carry an enormous vertical load as expected under heavy snowfall conditions. Wind is not a problem and being light and flexible, the domes are especially earthquake resistant.

New construction methodologies and the manufacturing of special tools and machinery were needed for the CWDs. For example, a device that controls the shape of the dome at any point during construction was developed, and special scaffolding services the interior and exterior during the construction and finishing stages. Other innovative tools include a three dimensional saw and a machine designed to convert flat sheet metal into the shapes required to fit on the dome roof and to produce custom shaped flashing.

Mill ends of scrap 2 by 4s were cut into small pieces ranging from 15 to 40 cm, and then assembled in small sections. These were then joined together with the help of the shape-controller to form the basic dome. Next, engineered strapping and fasteners were put in place providing the dome with strength and stability. No glue was used.

Methods were also developed to install drywall and to curve wooden plates. Techniques to install siding, roofing, electrical wiring and other construction elements were also developed as well as various systems to attach windows, doors and other openings.

Altus Engineering Ltd. is now in the process of applying for eight patents and the company is preparing to build the first manufacturing plant to produce these lightweight domes in sections to be shipped and assembled on site.

Salah believes the CWDs have the potential to positively impact the building industry in Canada and throughout the world. Since completing the dome prototype he has substantially improved the system by altering and adding many features, and has also developed a sectional dome technology.

The lifespan of a CWD is expected to be more than twice that of a conventional wooden structure, thereby causing less ecological damage as the environmental impact of these buildings is spread over a longer period. Altus Engineering and UBC will participate in a study to calculate the expected lifespan.

The structures are suitable for environmentally sensitive areas as jobsite disturbance is minimal and the CWDs are built using local materials, reducing energy use and pollution generated by transportation.

They are adaptable to layout and usage changes as the dome shell is structurally stable and does not require any interior support.

Canadian wooden domes contribute part of the answer to the chronic problems in the forest industry in Canada by creating exportable value-added products. By providing structures that are superior in terms of strength, energy efficiency, durability, aesthetics and economy, these innovative domes will contribute to Canada becoming a leader in the construction industry.

www.canadianwoodendomes.ca

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Breaking down, breaking open

UNIVERSE WITHIN

by Gwen Randall-Young

Within sorrow, there is grace. When we come close to those things that break us down, we touch those things that also break us open. And in that breaking open, we uncover our true nature.

- Wayne Muller

Our ego often has great plans for us. Like a child playing with a doll or an action figure, ego creates our identity, and then sends us forth into the world to live out the vision it has created. Not unlike a movie producer and director, ego would like to set the stage, write the script and have all the actors speak their lines as written.

Unfortunately, in life we do not have the same control as the child over his game, or the director over his movie. The other "actors" in our lives are simultaneously playing roles in many other movies, perhaps even trying to direct a few themselves. There may even be a master director, overseeing all of the productions. "All the world's a stage," Shakespeare wisely noted. Like a hall of reflecting mirrors, our lives may consist of stages, within stages, within stages, and at each level, our stages overlap and interconnect with the stages of others.

It is easy to see how infinitely complex the whole thing becomes. Imagine a circus performer trying to keep multiple tops spinning. Ego tries to keep its "spin" on every stage on which it plays a part. Is it any wonder that by the time humans reach mid-adulthood, stress, anxiety and depression reach near epidemic proportions? Increasingly there is a growing awareness that we do not have the control we thought we had.

That awareness may come as a result of the emotional exhaustion created by trying to stay on top of everything. More often, it comes in the form of a crisis - a loss or major disappointment. One of the productions on one of our stages takes a devastating turn. We may lose one of our lead actors, through death or dissolution of a relationship. A role we have played for many years may suddenly be denied us - a job layoff, children leaving home, even retirement.

One of ego's roles has been irreversibly altered: one of the tops stopped spinning.

This may constitute the beginning of the deconstruction of the entire ego complex. For if one aspect comes crashing down, what is to stop the others? The pain that is felt is both for the current loss in the life situation, but also for the loss of any sense of security tied to any of ego's roles.

This is the beginning of the breaking down process. There is sorrow, there is grief. The intensity of the loss can seem overwhelming. Our lives may seem to have lost meaning, and we may even begin to question the meaning of life itself. We are no longer who we thought we were. Worse yet, we may have no idea who we are. Having identified with ego for so long, there is no awareness of the level of consciousness beyond ego.

As ego begins to break down, at first it seems we are entering a void - a place of nothingness. This can be excruciatingly painful. This is not a peaceful letting go, it is more like something essential to our person is being wrenched from our grasp. It feels as though we are losing our very selves. We are, but fortunately, it is our false self that is beginning to die. Ego is like the cocoon surrounding our true essence, our spirit.

As we lose identification with ego, we feel humble. We may feel a loss of importance, a loss of identity. For so long ego had a sense of being somebody, and now that is slipping away. This is natural and it is good. We cannot remain attached to the cocoon any more than the butterfly can. We must release it to experience our true nature.

Our true nature is our spirit or soul. It is that aspect that is connected to the spirit of the cosmos. It is about connection and oneness, whereas ego was about separateness and disconnection. Our entire journey on this earth has been leading us in this direction.

When we leave the physical body, all that is left is soul. If we are firmly encased in the cocoon of ego, the shift can be abrupt and startling. If we have spent the previous decades slowly letting go of all ego attachments, the final letting go is effortless and joyful. The sooner we begin the process, the more of our years will be lived in a state of grace.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychologist in private practice. Her newest publication, Growing Into Soul: The Next Step in Human Evolution is available at www.gwen.ca

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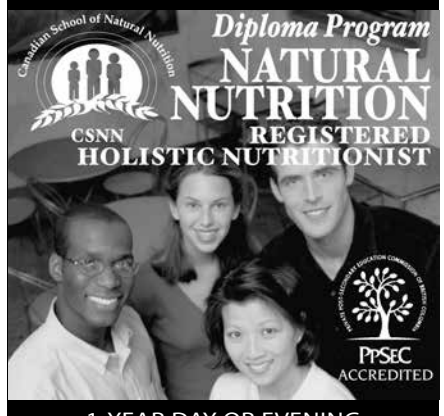

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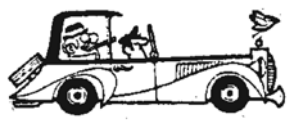

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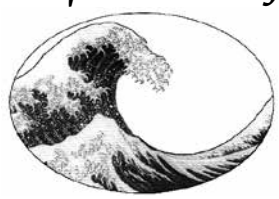

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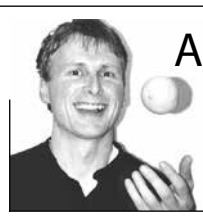

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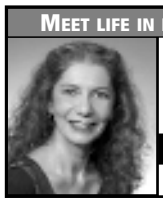

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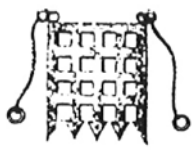

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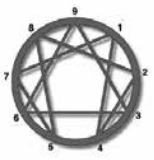

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Duel of dualities

TWENTY SOMETHING

by Ishi Dinim

Is it because I'm a Gemini? maybe it's just human nature. But the grass always seems greener on the other side. Well now I'm on the other side and it really is greener. Plus there are deer here and lakes and berry bushes too. I wonder how long it will be before another patch looks greener than the one I'm in? More, different, something else. As I pondered my never-ending desires it occurred to me that the grass might be equally green wherever I go. There are vibrant communities, healthy food and fresh inspirations in every nook on this spinning rock.

A few weeks ago I was with two of my best friends. One said something that really affected me. Dave grabbed me in his enormous grip and looked directly into my eyes, "It's not your fault." Now although he was drunk, there was such a real and lucid intention behind his words that it startled me. "It's not your fault!" he repeated. " What are you talking about?" I knew what he meant but I still played dumb. Blaine looked to me with a reassuring nod. Dave stared with kind eyes and a serious smile, " Everything - your parents, the past, history none of it is your fault, you can't change it." He grinned and released me slowly. The infectious grin spread to me; my guard crumbled. I hold so much anxiety and earnestness that I'm not even aware of. I don't realize that my internal monologue plays across my face and in my body language. Not only am I the problem but the solution as well.

Lately I've tried not talking as much as I usually do, just observing mostly. Constantly finding pleasure in fascinating and fleeting details. Silhouettes on the wall at sundown. The black dot on my lover's cheek. Baby swallows taking their first flight. A perfect avocado. It is in these joyful moments that I think, I could die now and that would be fine. Funny how contentment levels change overtime. What I'm willing to sacrifice is changing as well. Money and lifestyle are holding less sway, fading into the background. I'm becoming more honest with what I really need, to be loving, purposeful and significant. There is a multitude of various pressures in our culture aimed at keeping us dull and resigned. So many distractions, so many hopes. How can I stop a war. Maybe I'll just try to help my friends start recycling?

Now that I taken a little more time to relax and be still with myself I've noticed a few things. Life isn't such high or low stakes. There are medium ones. I'm faced with important decisions every day, but I am trying to see them more as a bunch of connected events than each one as a life or death scenario. I'm going to try letting go of figuring it all out, doing what I think is the right thing and not stressing on the results. What is supposed to happen always does. Fate kind of works like that.

On another note, does anybody out there want to change the world? I do. I've come to think that I can't do it by myself. So if there are any other people out there who want to help, let's organize something that could at least change this corner of the world, maybe other places too. Let's get together. Send me a message and let us see what can be done. Until next time; bocce ball in the park, happiness burgers, crazy schemes and trying to get by.

Choice words:

Ape shall never kill ape.

-Caesar, first law of the apes, Battle for the Planet of the Apes.

To know a man, observe how he wins his object, rather than how he loses it; for when we fail our pride supports us; when we succeed, it betrays us.

-Charles Caleb Colton

It is pretty hard to tell what does bring happiness; poverty and wealth have both failed.

-Kin Hubbard

Only the mediocre are always at their best.

-Jean Giradoux

Web connects:

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http://bentcomics.com/nick/archive.htm

www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/20040221-1.html# (this link is to see Spot; the whole site is rich with disinformation.)

Ishi graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in 2001, with a BFA major in photography. He enjoys cooking for loved ones and playing basketball. Currently he is working in film and collecting a wide variety of cacti. contact ishi@yahoo.ca awaiting to hear echoes back.

Protein lunches

NUTRISPEAK

by Vesanto Melina

MS, RD

As we move from summer holidays into fall, a challenge that surfaces annually is that of regularly filling our lunch bags for school, work, autumn hikes, or other pursuits. Whether our task is to meet the appetites of a crew of ravenous teenagers, to find something tasty to get us through the afternoon, or to meet our basic nutrient needs while trying to lose weight, a hearty, high protein lunch solves the dilemma. One family of my acquaintance has survived fairly well on seven long years of peanut butter sandwiches. Others however prefer a little variety and look forward to the occasional new taste treat.

Our books Becoming Vegetarian (co-authored with Brenda Davis) and Raising Vegetarian Children (co-authored with Jo Stepaniak) feature charts of creative sandwich and lunchbox ideas that are designed to provide a nourishing boost at midday and sustain you through the afternoon. Delicious new versions of hummus can be made with red beans, or with added flaxseed that provides your day's supply of omega 3s. For those with dairy allergies or lactose intolerance, Gee Whiz spread (made with white beans) and cashew-based Muenster Cheeze provide the cheesy flavour that we love.

For variety, occasionally replace the usual bread slices with fresh, crusty rolls, or pumpernickel. Other sandwich-like options, especially for those with gluten sensitivities, are nori rolls or vegetable salad rolls in rice paper wraps. Bean burritos are tasty cold as well as hot. To prepare one, fill a corn or wheat tortilla with mashed and seasoned pinto beans, plus your choice of avocado, salsa, sprouts, grated carrot, chopped white or green onion, tomato, lettuce, or olives.

Those who have been following the weight loss theme of my past few Common Ground columns may be encouraged to know that progress has been steady and rewarding. For the first month and a half, I followed a plan that resulted in a one-pound loss each week. Then, with helpful tips from coach Lizanne Foster, I shifted to a two-pound-a-week plan in which we combined my nutrition expertise with her awareness of my blind spots.

Following a diet that meets one's nutritional requirements makes an immense difference in preventing the cravings that can throw you off course. We require about 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram body weight; if your goal is to lose fat but not lose muscle, or even to gain muscle, it makes sense to ensure that each meal contribute at least 15 grams of protein. This nutritious sandwich filling, spread or dip meets the 15-gram requirement; bread further increases the protein to 20 grams per sandwich. A hungry teen or athlete can polish of two or three of these sandwiches and significantly boost his or her intake of protein, iron, zinc, calcium and vitamins in the process.

Angelic tofu sandwich filling

This sandwich filling has the flavour of deviled eggs, but without the cholesterol. A batch fills five or six hearty sandwiches; leftover filling can be refrigerated to use over the next day or two. If you prefer, this seasoned tofu can be served on a lettuce leaf as part of a salad plate. Try it as a spread on crackers, or served as a dip with raw veggies. Use it to fill half a pita pocket, along with chopped tomatoes and lettuce or sprouts.

1 lb firm tofu, drained
2-3 tbs mayonnaise
2 tsp soy sauce
1 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes
1/4 cup onion, finely chopped
1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
salt and pepper to taste

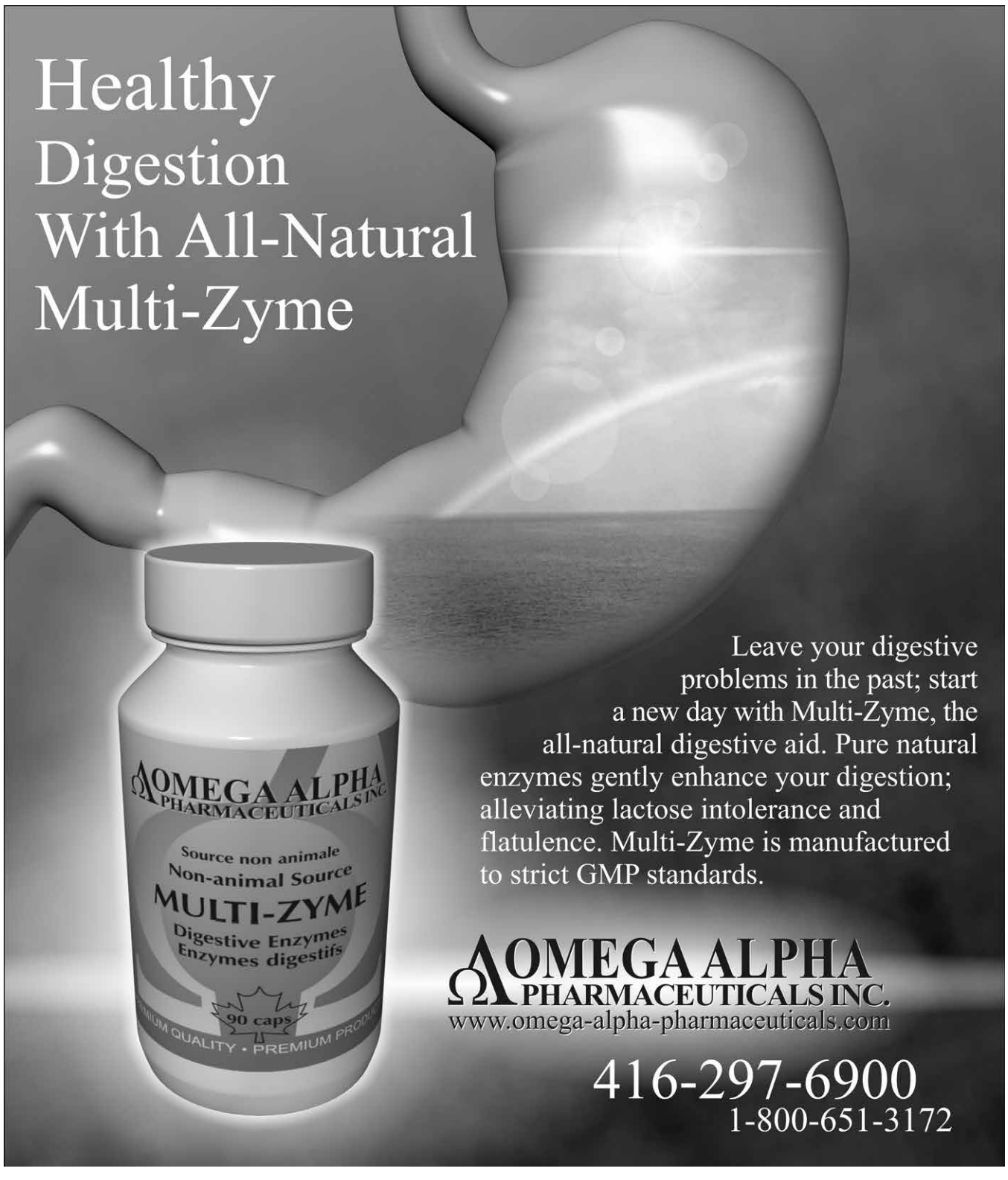
Drain tofu well and pat it dry with a clean cloth. Place tofu in a bowl and mash it with a fork or potato masher. Stir in mayonnaise, using just enough to make the tofu stick together (generally about 2 tbsp for moister varieties of tofu and 3 tbsp for dryer types). Add tamari, nutritional yeast, onion, celery, salt, pepper and any of the optional ingredients you would like to use.

Makes 2 1/2 cups (625 mL) or enough filling for five to six sandwiches.

Nutritional analysis per 1/2 cup filling: calories: 152, protein: 16 g, fat: 9 g, carbohydrate: 6 g, dietary fibre: 3 g, calcium: 120 mg*, iron: 10 mg, magnesium: 58 mg, sodium: 183 mg, zinc: 1.7 mg, folate: 51 mcg, riboflavin: 0.9 mg, vitamin B12: 0.6 mcg*, vitamin C: 2 mg, vitamin E: 0.1 mg, omega-3 fatty acids: 0.5 g.

*Analysis done using calcium-set tofu and Red Star vegetarian support formula nutritional yeast (the latter provides vitamin B12).

Vesanto Melina is a registered dietitian, internationally known speaker and consultant, based near Fort Langley. She is author of seven books including the new Food Allergy Survival Guide; her website is www.nutrispeak.com. For personal consultations call 604-888-8325.



SEPT CLASSIFIEDS

List at: www.commonground.ca > Advertising > Classifieds

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continued from page 20

vincial park called the Cody Caves. After a backcountry road drive and hike, we were amazed to encounter an old friend from my Banyen Books days at the cave entrance. Kevin Stanley, the gatekeeper of the caves, will take you for a spelunking trip through more than a kilometre of dissolving limestone wonder. www.codycaves.ca

After dinner in Kaslo, we drove due west over a mountain pass to New Denver. This windy, scenic drive took us along a tumbling creek, past waterfalls, beaver dams and small, high altitude lakes through the history-rich Valley of the Ghosts. When approaching other traffic and vehicles flash their headlights at you, it's a signal that there are bears or deer ahead; we saw many deer and a mother black bear with two cubs. Back at our Dome Quixote retreat, we sat on a balcony and watched the sun set behind the snowfields of the Valhallas, another highly recommended outing.

If you're looking for a break from the city hustle and bustle, Villa Dome Quixote and New Denver will provide rejuvenation and retreat. You'll enjoy one of BC's most interesting contemporary buildings in an area of unsurpassed natural beauty.

This unique wooden dome has captured the imagination of the public and has attracted thousands of visitors from all walks of life. In the last year Villa Dome Quixote has hosted cycling and outdoor adventure groups, yoga and wellness weeks, corporate and artists' retreats and family reunions. If you are visiting the area and are interested in touring the facility, you will be welcomed. More cabin-sized domes are being built to both expand the lodge and continue the research on dome construction.

See www.domequixote.com or www.canadianwoodendomes.ca

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On Track Zodiac

SEPTEMBER 2004 by Ilona Hedi Granik

ARIES (March 21 - April 19)
The dreamer is awake. The cast of characters have gone back to the land of make believe. You are the creator now, and can function at your own pace to get things done. If you aren't moving in a new direction, at least you won't be standing still.

TAURUS (April 20 - May 21)
You may be considering popping the question to your mate. Significant decisions regarding domestic affairs are seen in a new light. There is nothing to fear if you can say what your heart wants to say.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 20)
Feeling humble comes from getting knocked down out of the blue. When you get that perspective, things will never be the same. Chart a new life with clarity from your rarely discovered inner hope chest. Ahh the treasure within.

CANCER (June 21 - July 22)
Is your self-image undermining your happiness? These are huge questions that can no longer be swept under the carpet. With what you are learning, you will be displaying your glorious self as quickly as you can snap your fingers.

LEO (July 23 - August 22)
Time to step up to the plate with confidence and inspiration. The things you've worked towards now come to fruition. Shake the tree gently as your labour now proves worth the effort. You may choose to save or spend.

VIRGO (August 23 - September 22)
Your levels of trust are being tested. Were your feet planted firmly or were you lost in a haze of apathy and opposition? You may have landed on your butt. Chances are you find you feel much better than you ever did. We choose to be victims or to become victorious. Go for the gold.

LIBRA (September 23 - October 22)
It may be time to be more discerning about your emotional life. Current displays of affection may seem confusing. You could discover that the people you allow into your life may not be the healthiest. The new you may take a stand. From your voice comes a new communication as you weed out those you don't need in your life.

SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21)
You no longer are content to be invisible. You seek to be seen, heard and felt. There is a new dynamic energy within you. If you don't join the circus or learn to stand on your head, that would be a surprise. You seem to be going after what you want no matter how crazy it may seem.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 21)
The notion of absolution is not that far off. You will discover how the ever-forgiving fire sign is your true nature. The way in which you release people and old hurts needs to be directed artistically. Facing reality shows how your understanding is supremely driven.

CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 19)
There are so many twists and turns in the road ahead. Interesting to watch how all the possibilities lead to the success you see in your mind's eye. You have always enjoyed a rollercoaster or a steep hill and now you can raise your arms high with complete trust. What an adventurous person you have become.

AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 19)
You could be looking at defining who you are by the standards you set. Work ethic and morality seem to be a focus. Keeping structure will serve you to stay in the mix while demands are put upon you. You will glide along any stormy waters with a calmness that is your spiritual gift.

PISCES (February 20 - March 20)
What does "get real" mean to you? You may need to take stock of yourself and get your ducks in a row. Confusion has run amok and hesitation has had its day in the sun. You have big plans for your life if you get real. The timing is perfect to live life to the max. It's your movie, direct and enjoy.

Ilona Hedi Granik is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 29 years of experience in astrology, multi-media art and healing. Ilona23@shaw.ca

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

List at: www.commonground.ca > Advertising > Datebook

SEPT DATEBOOK

SEPT 7
Victor Chan reads from The Wisdom of Forgiveness, on the life and mind of the Dalai Lama. Free, Tues 7:30pm. Vancouver Public Library, 350 W. Georgia (604) 331-3603

SEPT 9 – OCT 28
"Getting Peace by Getting to Yes" – Practical communication skills and New Thought teachings to enhance relationships. Thurs. 7–9 PM. Sponsored by Emerald Heart Group. Call 604-540-7998.

SEPT 10-12
Dancing Our Stories. A retreat to explore spiritual life history through movement, art and writing. Gabriola Is. www.haven.ca or 1-877-247-9238 Catherine Fallis PhD., R.C.C. cfallis@paralynx.com or (604) 255-4843

SEPT 11
Shamanic Drumming Circle: Saturdays, Journeywork to contact dreamtime animal guardians for personal insight/healing. Drums supplied. Shared wisdom of this land. Newcomers welcome. 7pm. Donation. 604.418.9636. www.shamanichealing.info

SEPT 11 & OCT 16
Yoga Instructor Safety Course, now required for yoga teacher registration with YABC: 4 Saturdays + exam, Langara College $290, register 604-323-5322, pre-req: 200 hours yoga teacher training, more info 876-3465.

SEPT 13
Detoxification lecture with Dr. Greg P. Blaney. Monday, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. $20 fee. Pre-Registration is recommended. Call 604-224-6857.

SEPT 14
CD LAUNCH to support UTS AM/WITNESS and the Wilderness Education Program. 8pm. VECC (1895 Venables St). Tickets: $12/$8, at 604-280-3311, www.ticketmaster.ca, at door. Info: www.utsam-witness.ca

SEPT 17-19
What does it mean to be a soul having a human experience during divinely ordered chaos. Heritage Valley Retreat, Noreen 604-263-7970

SEPTEMBER 17, 18, 19
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Course. Intro: $10. Course: $295. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818.

SEPT 18
Science of Spirituality Birthday Celebrations. You are invited to a free birthday celebration of two great spiritual masters of Sant Mat: Sant Darshan Singh & Sant Rajinder Singh. Sat., 5pm, St. Mark's Church 1805 Larch St. at 2nd.

SEPT 18 & NOV 20
Introduction to Osteopathy at the Stillpoint Center for the Healing Arts. Saturday. Lecture 11am – noon/workshop 1pm – 5pm. Call 604-224-6583.

SEPT 19
24th Annual Terry Fox Run for cancer research. Run, walk, bike, wheel or skate at 130 locations in British Columbia and The Yukon. www.terryfoxrun.org, call 1-888-TFOXRUN (836-9786)

SEPT 19
Autumn Equinox Celebration. 11am to 3pm. All are welcome to participate with members Multi-Faith Action Society to celebrate the change of season. Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, 1607 E. Hastings Street. Please bring cushions. Potluck. Contact Barb Safrom: 604.879.2551.

SEPT 24
The Power of Neurofeedback Presented by International Speaker Dr. Valdeane Brown PhD BCIT Burnaby Campus: Building SW1 Room 1205 Ticket $15 or 2 for $25 Call (604) 936-0888 or (604) 697-0475

SEPT 25
Wolfsong Autumn Equinox Healing Celebration. Shared healing, aboriginal, sacred chants. Drumming, cedar flute, didgeridoo, crystal/meditation bowls. Vancouver Multicultural Centre, 1254 W. 7th. 7pm. Donation. www.shamanichealing.info (604) 418-9636.

SEPT 25
Dessert Concert with Leora Cashe and Sonicjoy presented by the Celebration of Life Centre. Jericho Hills Centre: 4196 W. 4th Ave, Kitsilano $20 / $15 (advance, students, seniors) Tickets and information: 604-731-3384 / colc@vancolc.org / www.vancolc.org

SEPT 25
Stretching and Osteopathy at the Stillpoint Center for the Healing Arts. Saturday. Lecture 11am – noon / workshop 1pm – 5pm. Call 604-224-6857.

SEPT 26
3rd Annual Indian Arm Paddle-a-thon. This non-competitive paddling event is a fundraiser for TLC The Land Conservancy of BC. Info/Registration: 604-733-2313 or www.conservancy.bc.ca.

SEPT 26
Dru Yoga Workshop. Semperviva Yoga Studio, 12:45pm - 3:45pm Phone 604-739-2009.

SEPT 28
Experience in a lifetime. Video presentation of Prem Rawat. Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace, 1825 W 16th Avenue, Vancouver (near corner Burrard & 16th) 7:30 - 8:30 pm. $8 or free.

SEPT 28TH TO OCT 19TH
Stretching and Osteopathy classes. Tuesdays from 7:30 – 9:00pm. $15 drop-in fee. Pre-registration recommended. Call 604-224-6857.

OCT 1
Vancouver Reiki Master Exchange. Come meet other Reiki Masters, share Reiki, experiences in an informal evening. Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace. Registration www.threshold.ca/reiki or 604-876-8816.

OCT 2
Dru Yoga Workshop Vancouver Island Phone 250-746-9877 or 250-743-1010

OCT 8 - 9
Dancing In The Light - A world/jazz concert, contemporary ballet, a captivating stage production integrated into a beautiful story of life and reincarnation. QE Theatre. Ticketmaster (604) 289-4444

OCT 8-10
Goddess Retreat - Vancouver Island, $200 Early Bird Includes: meals, accomodations, Guest speakers, Activities. If you are interested in attending, speaking, offering healing services, artwork: gailhull@shaw.ca www.wisdom-within.ca 250-479-2801

OCT 9 - 10
Laughter yoga with Dr. Madan Kataria MD, India based founder of International Yoga Laughter Clubs. A fun, healthy way to reduce stress and create well-being, this workshop also grants the International Laughter Instructor Certification. Contact: Allan O'Meara 604-734-4025 (humorbeing@shaw.ca)

OCT 9-11
Silent Spiritual Retreat. Relax, unwind, find deeper peace on this beautiful retreat with loving family. Trails to beach and mountains. SRMH Centre, Sunshine Coast 604-740-0898.

OCT 12
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Evening Course. Intro: $10. Course: $295. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818.

OCT 14
Presentation Conference for The Silva Method basic Seminar 7pm UBC Robson Sq Free Intro call 604 925 0816 info@silvamethod-canada.com

OCT 14-17
The first Northwest Social Forum convenes at Seattle Center. Workshops, panel discussions, round tables and more focus on current social issues with particular emphasis on the US & Canadian Northwest. For more information, visit www.nwsocialforum.org or call: (206) 448-7348 ext 342

OCT 14, 15, 16, 17
Enrich Your Life By Clearing Unhealthy Patterns Formed In Childhood with Transformational Facilitator Kelly Tobey. Vancouver Mason Building 1495 W8th Ave, Van. 604-277-9679 mail@kellytobey.com. www.kellytobey.com

OCT 15,16,17
Dru Meditation Residential Retreat 'Finding The Still Point In The Eye Of The Hurricane'
Phone 604-922-4067

OCT 16-17
Reiki Drumming - Experience this powerful 2-day workshop, on combining Level Two+ Reiki with Shamanic Drumming, this October in Burnaby. Instructor: Barbara McKell. Contact: LynAyre@telus.net 604-524-8565

OCT 22, 23, 24.
Introduction to Hand Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Course. Intro: $10. Course: $295. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818.

OCT. 22-24
The Canadian Foundation for Trauma Research & Education (CFTRE) has an upcoming Self Regulation Therapy Practitioner training in Vancouver. Info: toll-free 1-866-3TRAUMA or go to our website www.cftre.com

OCTOBER 22-25
Transformational Healing Retreat with Healing, Yoga Fun and more. Tranquil gardens in Halfmoon Bay - near beach and forest. Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre 604-740-0898

OCTOBER 23
Dru Yoga Workshop. Bahai Centre, 5880 Main/43rd. 10:30am - 4:00pm Phone 604-876-5153 Thursdays

Arthur Erickson Garden Tours 5 pm, guided tours of the Japanese inspired West Coast garden of Canada's celebrated architect, take time for this place of tranquility, reserve 604-738-4195.

SUNDAYS
The Centre for Spiritual Living Inspired by Deepak Chopra and Louise Hay? You'll love our Sunday services 9:00/11:00 am. Children welcome. 1443 W. 8th Ave., Vancouver, 604-321-1225 www.cslvancouver.com

Garden of Miracles Course Community meets 10:30 am, #106-1975 Lonsdale, North Van. A Course in Miracles Spiritual gathering. Meditation, prayer, music, spiritual message, call Rev. Susan 604 987-6985.

MONDAYS
Trager® Bodywork-Mind Approach: painless deep tissue & energy work. Demos: 3-5:15pm. Finlandia Pharmacy, 1964W. Broadway. By Louise Morin, CTP, 688.5838. www.trager.com

Shambhala Buddhism Open House 7pm meditation instruction, sitting meditation practice. 8pm refreshments, Buddhist talk and/or video and discussion. Free. Shambhala Meditation Centre, 3275 Heather at West 17th.

TUESDAYS
Reflexology Student Clinic sessions - only $15. Evenings only. By appointment. Pacific Institute of Reflexology. 604.875.8818
Wednesdays
The Healing Bodywork Centre offers a "Pamper your Partner" evening every last Wednesday of the month. 604.737.8350

WEDNESDAYS
Hawaiian Healing Night 7pm. Hawaiian guided Meditation, Sharing the Aloha,and snacks after, meet like minded people and share. $5.00 donation. At Hale Ola - a place of Healing 1215 Madison Ave. Burnaby 604-431-7474 Kaimana and Moanikeala

Dru Yoga Meditation 22 September - 20 October, 11:15am - 12:30pm Dru Yoga 4:00pm - 5:15pm, Semperviva Yoga Studio. Phone 604-739-2009

Shambhala Open House 7pm meditation instruction, sitting meditation. 8pm refreshments, talk and discussion. Free. Shambhala Meditation Centre, 3275 Heather at West 17th.

THURSDAYS
Discovery Toastmasters Club meets Thursday evenings beginning September 9th, 7-9pm Alan: 604-266-3765 or Pat: 604-261-0588. Guests are always welcome!

SATURDAYS
What is your Super Hero Power? Calling young people who know they are here to do something special. 521 West Georgia St. RSVP (604) 682-3269 ext 6245 by donation.
10:30am -12:30pm

ONGOING
Humuh Monastery Buddhist Meditation & Retreat Centre. An experience in Beauty and Dharma. Call 1-800-336-6015 for free brochure. Westbridge, BC www.humuh.org

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Philosophers' Café, many venues and topics, for listing check www.philosopherscafe.net

Thundering Word Heard poetry and spoken word Sunday nights at Café Montmartre, 4362 Main Street, 604-879-8111

Moreinfo.visitwww.commonground.ca or www.conversationcafe.ca / .org
Conversation Cafes restart in October

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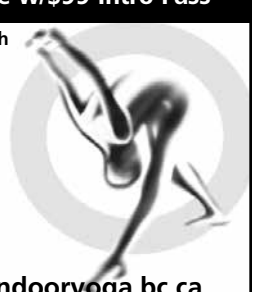

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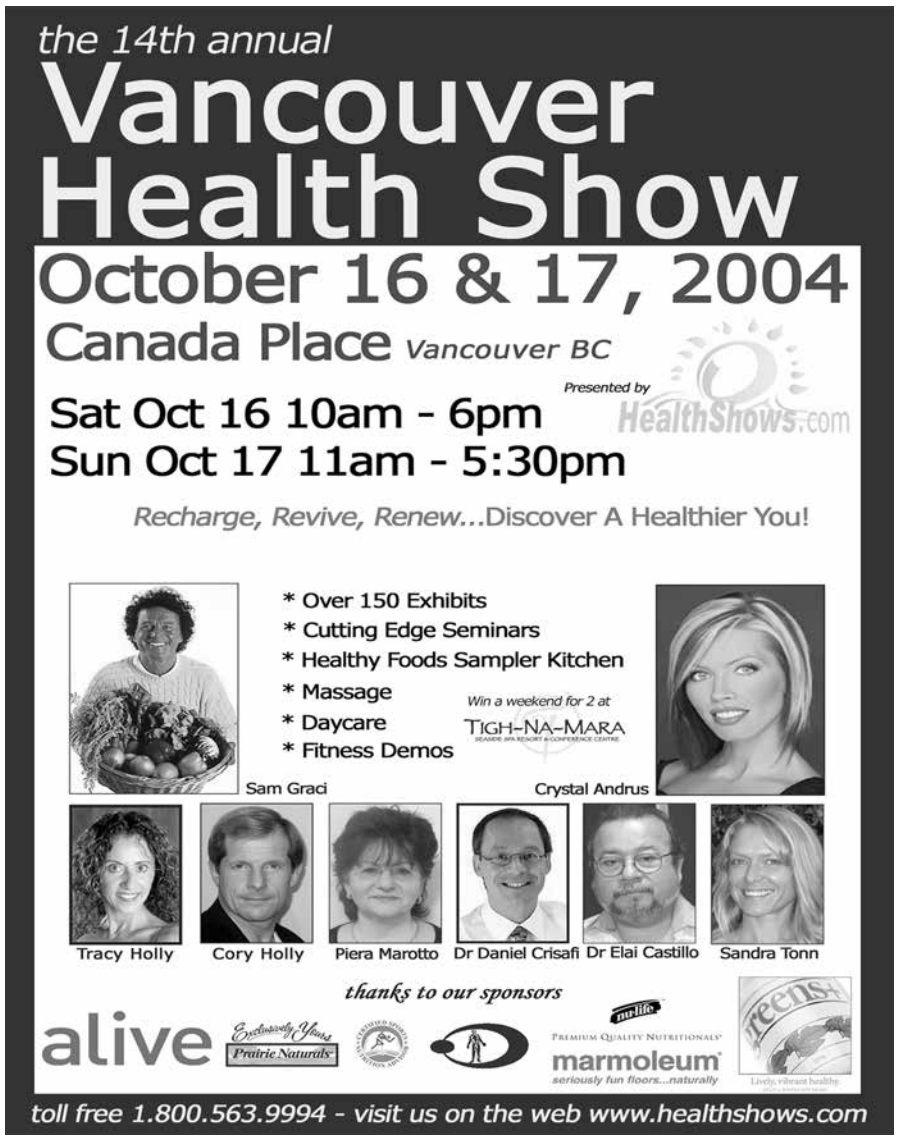

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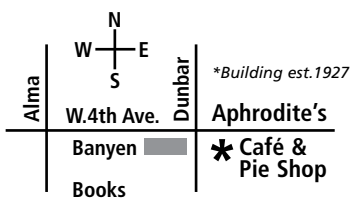

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KAREEN'S YOGA

by Kareen Zebroff

I am idly dragging my bare feet through the sand, not thinking, just being. The golden beach is endless and there is no one else in sight. Stretching away from me towards the horizon, until it becomes one with it, heaves the calm ocean. I have escaped.

As I amble along, I revel in a precious feeling of solitude, of lack of responsibility, of temporary freedom. My wondering eyes take in the fiery beauty of nature around me. Smaragdine grasses waving from the dunes, spotless seagulls teaching their babies to dive for clams, "heaven's ebon vault," and the shining copper disk of the setting sun turning a herd of fluffy clouds into flaming Chinese lanterns.

I want to be a part of all this splendour, to enter into it, to become one with it. Turning towards the sea, I advise myself to consciously feel every sensation and to allow nature to give of itself to me. The sand running between my toes, smooth and soft; the gentle breeze cooling me and caressing me like a lover; a conch shell inviting me to pick it up, its pink inside smooth as polished alabaster. I feel it, weigh it, inspect it, sniff its salty odour and listen to the sea within. The primordial hiss of waves spending themselves on wet sand enters my ear, my mind, my being. I yearn to be enfolded into this ocean of eternity, this everlasting music, this healing message given me by a loving mother.

Languorous and accepting, I enter the water to become a part of the sea, to "be" the sea, to return to the innocence and safety and nurturing fluids of nature's womb. I start a lazy breaststroke. Seen from the beach, I become smaller and smaller as I float off towards that line where heaven and Earth meet; where all is brilliant light, purity and serenity; where the sun is getting ready to be baptized once again. Drifting away on the shimmering highway of its reflected glory, I welcome the feeling of oneness that slowly melds me from entity into molecule, from atom into ether - an indistinguishable part of the light, the energy, the truth and the knowledge of God's universe.

By now you will probably have realized, that I am not at the beach in person, but rather that I am practising my own form of meditation at home. So many people have written me about being desirous of, but ambivalent and fearful about meditating that I wanted to show them an easy, personalized contemplative visualization anyone can do.

Meditation is merely the third and final step of a benign technique that helps to create a situation of stillness within you, the better for you to be able to yoke together body, mind and spirit. Not to be entirely thoughtless - an impossibility - but to learn to focus and calm down the madly uncontrolled and mostly repetitive thousands of thoughts we have per day.

The first step towards this ultimate goal is concentration - a turning inward of one's attention, a practising. Immersing oneself in the moment. Focusing on the conch shell with all one's being for example and thinking of all its various aspects, but no other thing.

The second step towards emptying the mind is contemplation - the seeing of a thing, person or situation in your mind's eye and examining it thoroughly from all possible angles, until that vaunted stillness sets in.

Eventually, says eminent yogini Marcia Moore, the regular practice of concentration and contemplation will become the meditation that is the means to quieting the mind and stilling all its noisy buzz and confusion.

To understand the yogic approach to meditation, we must first comprehend one extremely important distinction between Eastern and Western points of view, however. To the Western psychologist, consciousness is a function of the mind. The subconscious, the ego and the superego are all considered to be primarily mental processes.

For the Eastern thinker, the situation is reversed. He sees the mind as a small island within the vast, shoreless sea of universal consciousness. A North American professor once remarked that the mind was like the mortar holding the bricks of the building together. Whereupon the Hindu teacher replied, "but I thought it held them apart."

Patanjali, the father of yoga, defines yogic meditation as "the suspension of the modifications of the mind-stuff." And, we Westerners do have an inordinate amount of mind-stuff, don't we? It ripples the surface of our minds and distorts what's on them.

Instead, says Marcia, meditation must become a mirror, able to register light from beyond itself, just as the ocean does in my story. The clearer the mirror, the less of it you see and the more it becomes a transmitting lens.

Our higher purpose then, is to focus and reflect mental energy rather than to fabricate thought.

Kareen Zebroff's classic, revised book, The ABC of Yoga (Foulsham title: A Gentle Introduction to Yoga), as well as her Yoga Over 40 video, may be ordered from her website www.kareenzebroff.com

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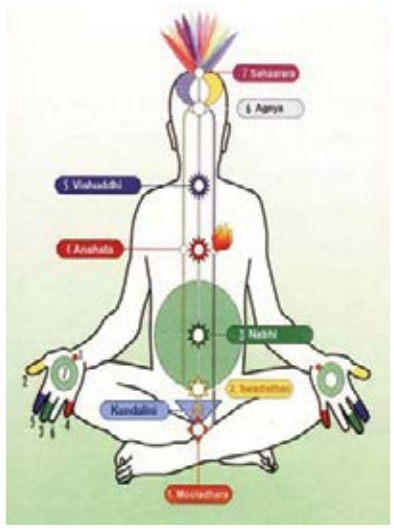

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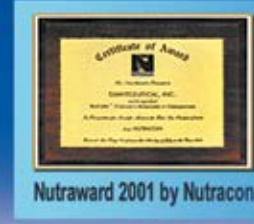

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